

# THE NATION

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## EVENTS OF THE WEEK

A GREAT step towards European appeasement was taken last Saturday and Sunday when a decision was made by the League Council at Geneva and confirmed by the Ambassadors' Conference in Paris to withdraw the Allied Military Mission from Germany, and to leave the supervision of German disarmament to the League. Furthermore, it was decided that no permanent control would in future be necessary, but that the League would undertake occasional investigations into any alleged breaches of the disarmament clauses of the peace treaties. The Allied Mission will be withdrawn on January 31st, and the League will be solely responsible for the supervision of disarmament after that date. Two points remain at the moment unsettled—the question of the Königsberg fortifications and the

definition of war material. These will be further considered by the Ambassadors' Conference; but if they are not cleared up before January 31st they will be brought before the Council of the League.

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This advance was only achieved after much strenuous negotiation at Geneva, and many frenzied communications between Geneva and Paris. M. Poincaré is reported to have done his best to wreck the settlement at the last moment, but M. Briand was firm, and the French Cabinet could not face a Ministerial crisis at this juncture. No formal agreement has been signed or initialled, but a document setting out the new arrangements in full detail has been left in Sir Austen Chamberlain's hands. There are obvious dangers in this dependence upon an oral understanding, but it shows the confidence of all parties in Sir Austen as an "honest broker." Much credit is, indeed, due to all three Nobel prizemen—M. Briand, Herr Stresemann, and Sir Austen Chamberlain—for their conduct of these negotiations. The hardest task was, no doubt, M. Briand's, for he alone had to encounter serious opposition from his colleagues at home. When we remember that the present Prime Minister of France was responsible for the Ruhr adventure, and thought Locarno a mistake, M. Briand's achievement appears truly remarkable. This is the first fruit of Germany's admission to the League. It removes a constant source of friction in Europe, and brings general disarmament substantially nearer to the sphere of practical politics.

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The dinner to Mr. Vivian Philipps at the Hotel Cecil was at least not as bad as the worst anticipations. Lord Grey repudiated the idea that he and his friends intended to force a formal split in the Liberal Party; and having explained at length why he could not work with Mr. Lloyd George, he concluded by intimating that he would not seek to emphasize differences in future. We wish we could feel assured that this was the position of all those who partook in the gathering; but somehow there remained a distinct suggestion (it lurked in Mr. Runciman's speech, and indeed in the whole atmosphere) that some of those present had not abandoned the idea of open and sustained hostilities. Mr. Vivian Philipps's reluctance to resign his office at Wednesday's meeting of the Administrative Committee needs careful scrutiny in this connection.

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The negotiations about Mr. Lloyd George's financial offer had finally resulted in Mr. Lloyd George waiving all conditions. The sub-committee which had been negotiating with him, and which is not, of course, composed of his partisans, after reporting this fact, recommended "unanimously and most strongly" that "the Administrative Committee ask all members of the Organization Committee to place themselves in its

hands in order that it may be free to consider afresh the constitution of the Organization Committee so as to secure the confidence of all Liberals." The report embodying this recommendation was adopted by 19 votes to 14; the minority arguing apparently that there were obviously conditions in fact if not in form, and asking as a test question what would happen if the Administrative Committee reappointed the existing organization *personnel*. It certainly seems highly probable that there is an honourable understanding between Mr. Lloyd George and the negotiators; indeed, the distinction between conditional and unconditional offers turns on nice points of casuistry, which have received more attention than in our judgment they deserve. It is plainly unreasonable to expect Mr. Lloyd George to hand over his money to an organization controlled by Mr. Vivian Philipps; and there is nothing discreditable or unworthy in either a cut-and-dried condition or an honourable understanding that Mr. Vivian Philipps should be replaced by someone detached from personal feuds. For the time being, however, Mr. Vivian Philipps declines to resign. He insists that "the Administrative Committee must make his resignation their act and not his." We should have thought that the resolution we have set out above would have met this desire sufficiently. But the question of resignation seems also to turn on fine points of casuistry. What is behind this casuistry and the delay which it involves? Hardly a desire to make things easier for the Liberal Party.

On Tuesday, Mr. Baldwin received a deputation of Tory Members of Parliament who urged that no successor to Mr. Krassin as representative of the Soviet Government in this country should be recognized until Soviet propaganda against the British Empire has been abandoned. This seems a peculiarly inopportune moment to choose for urging that view. It has now become clear that the main issue in the recent quarrel among Soviet leaders was this very question of propaganda. Stalin and his party stood for concentration on internal problems, while Trotsky and Zinovieff held that no real progress could be made with the development of Communism until revolutions had been brought about in other countries. The Stalin Party now appear to have been definitely victorious, and it would be foolish to embarrass them by asking for new undertakings (of doubtful value) before the fruits of their victory are seen. The Government's reply to the deputation was, however, to the effect that the Russians have no immediate intention of appointing a successor to Mr. Krassin, and that the work of Chesham House will be carried on by the present staff.

It is to be hoped that the existing lull in the operations between the Northern Tuchuns and the Cantonese will continue long enough to enable Mr. Lampson to conduct his inquiries into conditions in the Yangtze basin, and to get into touch with the contending parties. Some understanding with the Cantonese becomes daily more essential, and no good purpose is served by irresponsible criticism of their financial policy. Their methods of raising money may be arbitrary and economically unsound, but they are incomparably better than those of the Northern Tuchuns. The principle of the Cantonese levies appears to be that all employers shall pay an extraordinary war tax in the form of extra wages, and that these extra wages shall be collected by the unions and paid into the war chest. These levies are, no doubt, resented by the employers, but there is no reason to suppose that they are regarded by the Cantonese leaders as anything but temporary measures, or that any attempt would be made to main-

tain them if some arrangement could be reached with the Western Powers. The real danger of the position is that the Cantonese may refuse to discuss anything until they have attempted to march against the capital.

As the very large naval estimates just voted in Japan are likely to cause a certain amount of excited comment both in this country and America, it is worth while to set out the exact position as briefly as possible. The existing building programme will be completed in 1929, when the Japanese will have eight scout cruisers, twenty-one light cruisers, one hundred destroyers, and seventy-seven submarines in full commission; but of these, four cruisers, twenty destroyers, and eight submarines will then be due for replacement. Between 1929 and 1935 no less than ninety-one vessels of all classes will fall due for replacement. The present estimates are framed to complete the existing estimates and to make provision for the heavy replacement programme which Admiral Takarabe knows to be ahead of him. The outcome of these and successive naval estimates will be that the Japanese will maintain their Navy at its present numerical figure, although it will increase in military efficacy with the steady delivery of new types. It remains true, as we have frequently pointed out, that unless the Japanese very much increase the numerical strength of their Navy they will never be able to use it for anything but a strictly defensive strategy.

To the interminable dispute between Mexico and the United States over property rights under the land and petroleum laws, there has now been added an acute squabble over Nicaragua. A month ago Washington recognized the newly elected President Adolfo Diaz. Mexico retorted by recognizing the "Liberal Constitutionalist" Sacasa, who has set up a Government at Puerto Cabezas on the Caribbean coast. The American Admiral Latimer is there with a squadron, anxious to establish a blockade, but the Washington Government is holding him in. The Diaz Government issues a manifesto appealing to the Liberals not to follow the "sinister example" of Mexico in going into Communism and social disorder, while Mr. Kellogg, from the State Department, proclaims that the Mexican Government of President Calles is making for a "Bolshevist hegemony" of Central America. This extraordinary charge was given a great run in the American Press, but has now evidently run its course. The notion, however, that Mexico is making a bid for the leadership of Latin America is being gravely discussed in the United States, and there is much discussion as to what may occur in the smaller Central American Republics if the hold upon them of the United States is to be shaken. It is, however, difficult to see how that can happen in the near future, for all of them are gripped in tight financial bonds; while Mexico has her hands more than full with her own internal affairs. A more immediate question is whether the Washington Government will modify its hostility to the mining laws, which come into effect with the New Year, now that the European mining companies in Mexico are registering under them.

The report of the Imperial Conference on Dominion status has produced remarkable and opposite effects in Canada and South Africa. In Canada, the Conservatives have elected to attack Mr. Mackenzie King for exceeding his mandate, by assenting to a document which they describe as a danger to Imperial unity. In South Africa the report bids fair to bring old and bitter controversies to an end. Both General Hertzog and Mr. Tielman Roos have stated unequivocally that the



report satisfies all reasonable aspirations of the Nationalists, who can now co-operate whole-heartedly in working out the destinies of South Africa within the Empire. Mr. Roos has further intimated that he would gladly see the Flag Bill dropped or modified as an earnest of the disappearance of the racial conflict. Dr. Malan, on the other hand, has stated that the Government will proceed with the Bill. General Hertzog has not yet declared himself, and it is greatly to be hoped that he will come down on the side of Mr. Roos, for the dropping or postponement of this Bill would do more than anything else to convince English-speaking South Africans of the Government's sincerity.

Nikola Pashitch, the veteran Yugoslav leader, who died last week, was a statesman whose methods and conceptions of government were often of a kind which would be called "backward" if the criticism were polite, and would be given a very much stronger name if the criticism were unfriendly. But he was eminently a man who preached and practised all the political virtues that the difficulties of his position allowed him, and it was this which made him an outstanding figure. He grew up in a society which, when he was a young man, regarded political assassination as an Italian potentate of the fifteenth century would have regarded it; but, like Walpole, he was never a "man of blood." Several times during his career he was imprisoned by his political opponents; but he never made vindictive use of his own power, except, possibly, in one instance, of which we know little. Also, he never lost the virtues of his peasant ancestry; he kept himself so fit and strong that when well past seventy he could dance the "kolo"—a feat which many men of thirty would find exhausting; and though an unswerving patriot, he was never misled by the extremists of the Patriot Party who rose to influence after the first Balkan war. His notions of moderation would probably differ from ours; but it is a pity that he could not have lived to assuage the excitement with which the Tirana Treaty has been received.

The final batch of electoral results in India have added one more province to the Swarajist column—Bihar and Orissa. Here, as in Bengal, the Swaraj Party has won on its organization. It captured all the agencies of local government and the teachers, and in consequence has a solid block of thirty elected members in the Provincial Council. There are now, therefore, three provinces in which the Swarajists hold the strongest place, and it is worth noting that they won in Madras against a sectarian non-Brahmin campaign and in Bihar against a party of disunited and apathetic landlords. One consequence of these partial successes will be that the Swarajist leader, Motilal Nehru, will take his followers to the Indian National Congress in Assam next week with an enhanced determination to challenge the Responsivists, who believe themselves to be the dominant party, and to declare for a modified form of Non-co-operation. He may, however, find that it will be necessary to make terms with Mr. Gandhi, who is planning yet another raid upon the National Congress.

The report of the Royal Commission on Thames Bridges has been issued with dispatch. In the opinion of the Commissioners, Charing Cross Bridge should be built, the project of a bridge at St. Paul's should be abandoned, and Waterloo Bridge should be preserved. So much of the report will give satisfaction, but cause no surprise. But the Commission further recommends that there should be a new Central Authority to control and build bridges and to look after their approaches;

that there should be a new Ludgate Bridge, but no interference with the control of the City Corporation over the Bridge House Estate Fund. The whole programme would cost about £27½ millions, of which £19 millions would be raised on loan by the Central Authority, the interest being earmarked from the Road Fund. The balance would come from the Bridge House Estates and the local authorities concerned.

It seems that the L.C.C., with its normally docile Conservative majority, is to be a thorn in the flesh of the Minister of Health as well as in that of the President of the Board of Education. The opposition of Mr. J. M. Gatti, the Chairman of its Finance Committee, to Circular 1371 took the form of pressure behind the scenes. But other attempts at Government economy at the expense of the ratepayers have met with more overt opposition. Last month the L.C.C. endorsed, in a report signed by Sir Cyril Cobb, Mr. Chamberlain's proposals for reforming the Poor Law. This month they have rescinded that endorsement, so far as percentage grants are concerned, in a further report, also signed by Sir Cyril Cobb, confirming the attitude of the Association of Municipal Corporations. And, this week, the Chairman of the Housing Committee, Lt.-Col. Levita, showed his resentment at the proposed reduction of the Housing Subsidy by publicly attacking the Finance Committee for not issuing a report on its effect.

In connection with the article on "anti-vivisection," by Professor A. V. Hill, which we publish on another page, it may be noted that in the House of Lords last week Lord Russell put forward the suggestion originally made by Professor Hill in a letter to the *Times*. This suggestion is that, in order to reduce the temptation to steal dogs for sale to research laboratories, stray dogs, which are going to be destroyed in any case, should be made available for the purposes of research. Replying to Lord Russell on behalf of the Government, Lord Desborough said that he personally—and he believed the Home Office would agree—thought the suggestion a most excellent one. Lord Russell also made the alternative suggestion that the dogs required should be bred by the laboratories themselves, and this course would certainly be the most acceptable if it did not prove too expensive.

Thousands of those who have enjoyed Mrs. Agatha Christie's mystery stories, together with thousands more who had probably never even heard of them, have been following with the keenest interest the mystery of that lady's own disappearance. The finding of her empty car in a picturesque part of Surrey, the long and fruitless search over the Downs, with the help of aeroplanes, tractors, bloodhounds, and thousands of amateur detectives, the dragging of the Silent Pool, the arrival of divers for the closer examination of that romantic piece of water, and the strange fact that a letter in her handwriting was posted in London during the night of her disappearance—these provided all the elements of a thrilling detective story. At first sight, the dénouement seemed disappointing: Mrs. Christie had been staying at the Harrogate Hydro since the day following her disappearance; she was apparently in good health, but was suffering from "complete loss of memory." But on closer examination it will be seen that this outcome provides a supreme touch of comedy to round off the story; for in the mysterious letter to her brother-in-law, which she posted after leaving home, Mrs. Christie stated that she was going to a Yorkshire Spa, and she remained undiscovered for ten days in the leading Yorkshire Spa.

## LIBERALS AND LEADERS

IT is an amiable convention of the Liberal Party to treat its leaders with great respect and deference. It is one of the hardest facts of life that amiable conventions often have disastrous consequences. How much of the disrepute into which Liberalism has fallen is attributable to the absurdly exaggerated importance attached to the sayings, the doings, the quarrels, the vagaries, and the fixations of a small number of individuals who, because they happen to have held high office in other and very different days, are regarded as the authoritative exponents of Liberal opinion! This is by no means the first time that the Liberal Party has suffered seriously from this cause; and it is instructive to note that the infirmity is peculiar to the Liberal Party. The Labour Party treats its leaders with no respect or deference at all, and is thus happily immune from damage at their hands. Is it conceivable that the Labour candidate at a by-election would be seriously embarrassed by the knowledge that the Labour Front Bench in the House of Commons was at sixes and sevens, as it usually is for that matter, on the important issues of the day? Yet Lord Grey tells us, in effect, that Liberals cannot be united in the constituencies, because he and Mr. Lloyd George do not see eye to eye on China! Who supposes that Labour would suffer a very serious set-back at the polls, if two sections of Labour leaders quarrelled openly, and subjected one another's characters and records to an exuberant abuse of which Lord Grey would be incapable? Nay, who can imagine any group of prominent Labour figures daring to take themselves so very seriously as Lord Grey and his friends took themselves at the Hotel Cecil on Monday night?

The Conservative Party treats its leaders with more of the Liberal tradition of respect and deference. Why does it seldom suffer in a similar degree? The answer takes us to the root of the Liberal trouble. It is a normal human tendency to become more conservative in outlook as you get older. It is no less normal to be quite unconscious of the change, and to repudiate any suggestion of it with honest indignation. You hold all your old radical opinions just as strongly as you ever did; indeed, on one or two matters, you have actually altered your views in a progressive direction. In short you are more "advanced" than ever. Thus Roebuck Ramsden in "Man and Superman." Thus Lord Grey at the Hotel Cecil. The trouble is that the world moves and the problems change; and the ideas which constitute the disreputable radicalism of one generation have a way of becoming part of the conservative orthodoxy of the next. Francis Place was a notable Radical a hundred years ago; his ideas were very similar to those which Mr. Runciman holds to-day; and very likely that is what Mr. Runciman means by calling himself a Radical.

We are far from suggesting that there is any presumption in favour of a new idea as such. There are fashions in ideas, as well as in dress, and changes of fashion are often changes for the worse. Nothing is more foolish, or in the long run more destructive of fertile thought, than to make it a point of honour to be "advanced." But we do suggest that we must always

be ready to revise and to readjust our ideas as circumstances change. After all, political and economic ideas which have a sufficiently definite content to be of service in dealing with concrete problems, are necessarily relative to a particular set of circumstances; they cannot be absolute and eternal verities; and it is a grotesque and stultifying presumption to speak of them as though they were. Indeed, we go further: we say that it is in a readiness to revise and readjust our ideas, in other words, in an open-minded approach to new problems, that the very essence of Liberalism lies. That, of course, is why we tend to become more conservative as we grow older; for, as we grow older, we get more rigid, prejudices become fixed, we cease to be interested in the new problems, we find them distasteful in themselves, and the task of revision and readjustment becomes more painful.

Now this tendency is apt to lead in the Liberal Party, particularly in times of rapid change, to a profound disharmony between leaders and rank and file, to which the Conservative Party is not exposed. Historically, the Liberal Party has always been in process of losing members to Conservatism. It would take some step involving a departure from cherished formulas, and some of its old adherents would go over, lamenting that the Party was no longer faithful to Liberal principles. This shedding process has been constantly at work, the party making good the losses, under the old two-party system, by recruiting more than its share of the younger generation. But the shedding has usually stopped short of men of Front Bench rank, attached by closer ties to the party as an institution. It has been customary for them to stay even when profoundly out of sympathy and perhaps out of touch with the prevailing tendencies in the party. And this lack of sympathy is very apt to express itself in the form of a sharp personal antagonism against those leaders who are in sympathy with the new ideas that are stirring, who press them forward on every possible occasion, and thus seem primarily responsible for placing their more conservative colleagues in a position which they feel to be uncomfortable and false.

These are general considerations, and we do not suggest that they supply anything like a full account of the personal quarrel which still distracts the Liberal Party, though we believe that they play a part in it. It is not the merits of that quarrel that we wish now to discuss. Our object is to place it in its true perspective. Liberalism is a very much larger thing than its leaders, united or divided. It is something very much more than an aggregation of two warring factions, the one devoted to Mr. Lloyd George and the other, in Lord Grey's phrase, "to Lord Oxford and his friends." And it resents bitterly and vehemently the general disposition to reduce it to such terms.

Ever since the outbreak of the quarrel at the end of May the chief emotion of the Liberal rank and file has been one of impotent rage that it should be possible for a quarrel among its leaders to do such damage to its cause. It has coined such slogans as "A plague on both your houses" in the hope of conveying to the leaders and the general public that there is such a thing as Liberal opinion, which refuses to sink its identity in either a Lloyd-George or an anti-Lloyd-George faction.



It has not so much demanded unity among its leaders as striven to assert its independence of their disunity. It has been saying in effect, "If you cannot compose your differences, at least your differences shall not split us." It has been trying, in short, to convey to its leaders a due sense of their proper relationship to the party.

All this seems to have been lost on those who did honour to Mr. Vivian Philipps at the Hotel Cecil. Perhaps the most illuminating sentence in Lord Grey's speech was the following:—

"We felt after the trial of unity in the summer that we could not keep step with Mr. Lloyd George in the Shadow Cabinet, in close co-operation and counsel. And I would say to those who say: 'Let everything be as it was, let the Shadow Cabinet be reassembled under Mr. Lloyd George as if nothing had happened'; I say: We already see that if we had done so the day after Lord Oxford retired, we should again be in the difficulty of keeping step."

Thus Lord Grey appears to labour under the illusion that the desire for unity among the Liberal rank and file is primarily a desire for the reassembly of the Shadow Cabinet. Never, we would assure him, was illusion more complete. The appropriate comment on the suggestion is contained in an old letter of Mr. Asquith's, quoted by Mr. J. A. Spender in his *Life of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman*. Sir William Harcourt had resigned the Liberal leadership in the House of Commons. "C.-B." was indicated as his obvious successor. But with whom did it rest to take the formal initiative in proposing him? Tradition pointed, rather vaguely, to joint nomination by the surviving ex-Cabinet Ministers (the term, "Shadow Cabinet," had not yet been invented). Then, as now, personal difficulties stood in the way of the assembly of this body. Mr. Asquith recited some of the difficulties, and concluded: "And is there any member of it in either House who wishes to see it assembled for any purpose under heaven?" That, we imagine, would be the almost unanimous reaction of Liberals to-day.

But Lord Grey's preoccupations with the Shadow Cabinet and his doubts as to whether, if reassembled, it could have stood the strain of Mr. Lloyd George's speeches about Labour and about China are highly significant. They imply a conception of the relationship between a party and its front-bench figures, which indicates the misunderstandings that can arise from that amiable Liberal convention of respect and deference. In Lord Grey's view, those individuals who have attained Cabinet rank in the past, together with any of their friends whom they may think fit to co-opt, are apparently endowed with a prescriptive right to determine Liberal opinion. They meet together, deliberate gravely, and pronounce; and what they have pronounced is orthodox Liberal policy. It is apparently not necessary for them, in discharging this task, to make themselves sensitive to the opinions which Liberals actually hold; at least we can recall no occasion in recent years when Lord Grey has troubled to do so. Indeed, we rather suspect that he would regard such sensitiveness as degrading, as a sort of opportunism and keeping your ears to the ground, unworthy of the best traditions of British public life. It is the duty of the leaders to "keep in step" with one another (though

Lord Grey, as a matter of fact, has never been remarkable for keeping in step—witness his attitude over the Irish Boundary question only two years ago); but it is not their duty to keep in step with Liberal opinion, which, as an entity distinct from the opinion of the leaders, does not seem to have a very clear existence for Lord Grey.

Now this is a conception of the rôle of leadership which the Liberal Party to-day cannot afford to tolerate. Liberals have opinions of their own, differing it is true widely from one another; but it is by the trend of opinion among the intelligent and interested rank and file, and not by the balance in any Shadow Cabinet, that Liberal policy must be shaped. The leaders exist for the party, and not the party for the leaders; and Liberals throughout the country would be grateful if the leaders would but recognize that fact.

## THE TREATY OF TIRANA

THE treaty which has just been signed by the Italian and Albanian Governments has had an immediate repercussion upon the relations between a number of European countries—between Italy and Yugoslavia, between Italy and Greece, between Italy, Yugoslavia, and Rumania, and between Italy, Yugoslavia, and France. This is an unpleasant reminder that we have not yet got rid of the old European system which was responsible for the war of 1914-1918 and all its predecessors. The truth is that, in post-war Europe, two rival and in the long run incompatible systems are struggling for the mastery of the Continent. There is the old system of the European Balance of Power—of which the Treaty of Tirana and its repercussions are an illustration—and there is the new system represented by the Dawes Plan and the London Agreement of 1924, by the Locarno Pacts, by a League of Nations with Germany on its Council, by the cartel between the iron and steel industries of Germany, France, Belgium, and Luxemburg, and above all by the general tendency towards a reconciliation between Germany and France. This nascent system of European solidarity and co-operation is absolutely necessary for the salvation of Europe in a world in which Europe is no longer all-powerful; but it is by no means certain yet that Europe is going to save herself. The policy of solidarity presupposes a vision which penetrates beyond the boundaries of Europe and beyond the present and the immediate past, but such vision is possessed by few. Most people's vision is bounded by the immediate past and by their next-door neighbours, and this tells heavily in favour of the old system and against the new. The common run of European statesmen continue to play the old European game and fail to see the shadows of greater events on a wider stage which are swiftly falling across our continent.

If the new system were in thorough working order and in undisputed possession of the field, the position of Albania would be made secure by the mere fact of her membership in the League, and special entanglements with neighbouring countries would not be forced upon her. In other words, her permanent diminutiveness and her temporary backwardness and turbulence would not be, as they actually are, a source of danger to herself and to Europe in general. For Albania, however, the new European system is still something rather speculative, while the old system is something very real and very insistent. In the course of her hitherto short life as an independent state, Albania has already experienced both an Italian and a Yugoslav invasion. The

Jugoslavs were held off by the machinery of the League, set in motion by Great Britain. The Italians were driven out by the Albanians themselves. Evidently the Albanian people—or, at any rate, the momentary President of Albania, Ahmed Zoglu—feels that the security offered by the League is not enough, and that it must be supplemented by an alliance. The choice being between Italy, who at the worst would turn Albania into an Italian protectorate, and Jugoslavia, who might be capable of swallowing Albania whole, the Albanians naturally turn to the country which is less likely to push the process of assimilation to extremes.

From the Italian point of view there is, of course, nothing particularly reprehensible about the negotiation of this treaty with Albania, if the old system of the Balance of Power is taken for granted. The Treaty of Tirana is, no doubt, directed against Jugoslavia; but in this respect it stands on all fours with the Little Entente treaties, which are directed against Hungary and Bulgaria, and with the treaties which France has negotiated with the several members of the Little Entente or with Poland, which are directed against Germany. Morally, the Treaty of Tirana is no worse, if no better, than these other treaties of the antique pattern. At the same time, it is evident that in practice this particular treaty is unusually dangerous.

Between Powers of more or less the same calibre, a treaty of amity may mean nothing but what it professes to mean; but where there is so great a disparity as there is between Italy and Albania, a bipartite treaty on these lines, however equal in form, must in fact tend to give the stronger country a virtual protectorate over the weaker. In the present treaty, moreover, even the fiction of equality is not, apparently, maintained. At least, the first article is reported to provide that any threat to the political, juridical, and territorial integrity of Albania will be regarded by Italy as being contrary to the common interest of the two contracting parties; and this provision seems to open a wide door for Italian intervention in Albanian affairs. It is, of course, denied that there are secret clauses or annexes, but it may be replied that there is no need for any. The first article, if correctly reported, gives Italy everything she requires.

The Italian Government might argue that, even if the treaty does invest Italy with something like a potential protectorate over Albania, this will never really come into play. The mere existence of the treaty will be sufficient to check, among Albania's landward neighbours, any temptation to trespass on Albanian ground. There might be considerable force in this argument if Albania were a stable country, like Austria or Belgium. In fact, she is a house divided against herself, and the faction which seizes the Government and signs a treaty to-day is exceedingly likely to be hunted from power to-morrow. In the case of international engagements of a general character, such as the Covenant of the League, this internal instability, though inconvenient, is not a serious danger, since engagements of that kind stand above party politics. With the Treaty of Tirana, however, it may be otherwise; for if the faction in power have signed a treaty with Italy, with an eye to fortifying their position, the obvious countermove for their opponents is to secure Yugoslav support by offering a still more favourable treaty to Jugoslavia. A situation might easily arise in which Italy was confronted with a choice between allowing the Treaty of Tirana to collapse with Ahmed Zoglu or taking full advantage of her rights under Article 1; and if she chose the latter alternative the fat might yet be in the fire.

Undoubtedly Jugoslavia would take Italian intervention in Albania tragically; and, in one important respect, tension between Italy and Jugoslavia is more serious when it arises over Albania than when it concerns Dalmatia or

Fiume. These latter controversies, which kept Italo-Jugoslav relations on the strain from the moment when Jugoslavia came into existence down to 1924, were primarily controversies between Italians and Croats, in which the Serbs, who are the dominant partners in the Serb-Croat-Slovene kingdom, were interested only indirectly. A controversy over Albania touches the Serbs to the quick, and the Serbs are in control of the Yugoslav war machine. The Treaty of Tirana is calculated to draw the Serbs and Croats together on a basis of common resentment against Italy for meddling on the eastern side of the Adriatic.

It is ominous to read that the emotion excited in Belgrade by the signature of the Treaty of Tirana reminded observers on the spot of the effect produced by the Austro-Hungarian annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1908. That implies that, as between Italy and Jugoslavia, the treaty may really have sown the seeds of future war; and several other countries have been stirred, though in a lesser degree. Roumania is evidently embarrassed, for, ever since the establishment of cordial relations between Italy and Jugoslavia in 1924, it has been Rumania's policy to cultivate a friendship with both parties, and now the ground may be cut away beneath her feet. The Greeks, again, though they have recently found Jugoslavia an unpleasant neighbour to deal with over the Salonica Railway, have been reminded by the Treaty of Tirana that, if Greek and Yugoslav interests threaten to conflict in the *Ægean*, they are still identical on the Adriatic coast. The most serious repercussion is that upon the relations between Italy and France. When the Yugoslav Foreign Minister, Monsieur Nintchitch, protested against the Treaty of Tirana by resigning, and when, in consequence, the Coalition Government in Jugoslavia fell, the Italian Press took the line that this demonstration was not spontaneous, but was inspired by French diplomacy. At this moment the Italians are trying to see themselves—just like the Germans before 1914—as a peaceful, unaggressive nation which is being malevolently encircled by wicked neighbours. For the first time since the Napoleonic Wars, there is tension along the Franco-Italian frontier. This is a very serious matter for Europe.

## ANTI-VIVISECTION

By PROFESSOR A. V. HILL, F.R.S.

A TRADESMAN supplying animals and food to the Department of Physiology at University College was recently convicted at Bow Street of stealing two dogs which he stated (probably correctly) he was bringing to the laboratory for sale. In the course of his duties the Professor of Physiology at University College (as at other places) must obtain animals for demonstration and research work in his laboratory, and appreciating the ease with which dogs may be stolen he had insisted that with the dogs purchased there should be a certificate that the animals were the lawful property of their vendor. At the police court the magistrate (being, as the Home Secretary afterwards stated in the Commons, unaware of the facts) made various reflections on the alleged procedure at University College for the purchase of animals, which have served since as the text of a violent campaign of misrepresentation in the Press. The public was probably astonished to hear from the *MANCHESTER GUARDIAN* that "the University College School of Physiology is faced with the task of explaining how such a particularly odious trade comes to be practised in its precincts," and again, "the vivisection of household pets, stolen from the streets for that purpose,



will be approved by no one": the implication plainly being that those who carried out the experiments, or purchased the animals, also organized the thefts. Others, less practised in the skilful use of words, followed the lead of the MANCHESTER GUARDIAN. It was stated, or implied, that the convicted man had been "employed" by the College to steal the animals, and that in the time saved from this adventurous pursuit he looked after them in their cages; the truth being that he never was employed by the College, and that skilled attendants care for the animals, who live under admirable conditions, the laboratory being at all times liable to visits by an inspector appointed by the Home Office. The authorities of two hospitals in London allowed it to be stated that in their laboratories no dogs are employed, thus admitting that research for which dogs are essential cannot be conducted there: to the cynical these statements may not seem unconnected with the financial needs of the hospitals in question. And then the great British Public began writing anonymous and threatening letters to the Provost, to the Professor of Physiology, and later, to myself.\*

My part in the matter was a small one. I am not responsible for the purchase of animals, nor do I employ dogs in my experiments. I am prepared, if the necessity arise, to use elephants, but in point of fact the only warm-blooded animals I have ever employed are myself and such of my colleagues and students as are ready to submit to rather strenuous treatment: my particular researches have not, as yet, required other animals. I ventured merely to write a letter to the TIMES in which I pointed out that the present wanton destruction of fifty thousand stray dogs per annum is the chief cause of the shortage of animals for experimental work, and of the temptation to steal them to which livestock dealers are thus exposed. The law (Dog Act, 1906, chap. 32, sect. 3 (5)) provides that "no dogs so seized (by the police) shall be given or sold for purposes of vivisection." The insertion of this sub-section was due to persons opposed to all experimental research on animals, and, as I pointed out in the TIMES, the destruction of fifty thousand stray dogs per annum (of which perhaps 2 per cent. are required in London for experimental purposes) is the chief factor in the present anomalous position.

The first consequence of this letter was a telephone call to my house which was answered by my boy, aged eleven. The gentleman at the other end, who refused to give his name, after ascertaining that the voice came from my son, made various adverse comments on my behaviour, and finished up by saying he was going to shoot me. David, being a sportsman, although somewhat shaken by this communication, informed the gentleman at the other end that he was "a silly fool," and the incident ended: David being somewhat relieved to see me home an hour later. Next morning the flood of correspondence began. The writers seemed mostly (like the ex-Kaiser) to be on very familiar terms with the Almighty, and to be convinced of His disapproval of the methods of experimental research, adopted since the days of Harvey, in the medical sciences. One apparently did not carry her anti-vivisection principles beyond the grave: she hoped and believed that in the next world I might be changed into a dog and that there I might be subjected to all the excruciating tortures which at present I wantonly inflict upon our dear dumb friends, "Perhaps you will enjoy it, you inhuman monster." Another stated that she would gladly have signed her name and given her address, only she had "a beloved dog" of her own which presumably she feared I might send my agent to steal. Another asked, if they could

do without dogs at Guy's Hospital why could they not also do without them at University College, where "the students are inferior in every way." Three ladies wrote courteous and rational letters, to which I have replied. The initial outburst terminated in a letter from Mr. Coleridge to the TIMES implying, though not daring to assert what is notoriously untrue, that the insulin treatment of diabetes is ineffective.

A similar but greater avalanche of correspondence descended on the Provost and on the Professor of Physiology. Much of this was insufficiently stamped—one way presumably of "taking it out" of them. Again the writers seemed to possess special information as to the opinion of the Creator "who never designed that one creature should profit at the expense of another" (presumably carnivora were a mistake): threats of violence were frequent: so was abuse, "you dirty reptile," "you filthy swine," "torturer"; "are you a murderer as well as a thief?" and so on. "If I lived in London I should call and thrash you" (this brave man does not sign his letter); to the Provost "those who treat animals so would not have the pluck to stand up in a boxing ring"; to the Professor "was it you who threw the dog from the roof of your college to see how it would die?"; to the Provost "but what can one expect in a country where such vile scum as Cook and Smith is tolerated"; and "why not have a grand holocaust of stolen dogs and cats to celebrate your blooming centenary?" "I would ask if no person can be found zealous enough to offer his body for these wonderful experiments" (but no offer made); a letter addressed to the "Professor of Brutality and Torture"—"Didn't JOHN BULL show your cruel, filthy set up three weeks ago?"; "If you possessed a loved dog that *trusted* you and *loved* you" (she would be astonished if she saw "Joey" waiting for my return); "With all your hellish experiments you have found no cures for colds and measles"; on a cutting enclosed from the TIMES—"Thy name stinks"; on a postcard signed by J. Hall of Birmingham, "I shall arrive in London soon after this postcard; from that moment you will have tortured your last animal" (this stout fellow seems to have thought better of it); in a letter signed and addressed from a dear old lady—"Whatsoever ye do to the least of My little ones, ye do it unto Me" (not realizing that the little ones referred to were children and that countless children owe their lives and happiness to medical research); "many vivisectionists have died painful deaths" . . . "I have the gift of second sight and when your time comes and you die of an agonizing form of cancer (AS YOU WILL) remember this letter; are you beginning to feel anything yet? I expect not, but look out for symptoms early in the New Year"; "instead of taking dumb creatures for your accursed experiments you had better have some of our criminals and lunatics" (is there any significance in the word *our*?); two other humanitarians raise the same question; "You cannot imagine our Lord in a laboratory" (or writing anonymous letters like these). One only, of charming simplicity, in reply to a letter of explanation of what we really do, "I feel I must write and thank you for your kindness and patience with me; and personally I do believe all you have told me about the cats."

This article is not intended as a vindication of experiments on animals. As Voltaire said: "The interests of truth are of more importance than one's contempt for fools"; but the truth is given, in much more effective array than I could command, in the Report of the Royal Commission of 1906, which recent researches have more than justified. My object is, firstly, to warn humane and rational people of the strange company they may find themselves in: and secondly, to point out that the prime cause of all

\* Since this article was written another case of alleged dog-stealing has occurred, and a Professor of Pharmacology has been summoned for receiving a stolen dog "knowing it to be stolen." On this case no comment is made, as it is still before the courts.

the trouble is the anomalous state of the law. According to the law responsible persons, duly licensed by the Home Office, are permitted to make these experiments on dogs; they are made under extreme precautions, and are subject to frequent inspection by the Home Office. Equally, according to the law, the work is hindered by the useless killing of unwanted animals, authorized—indeed required—by the sub-section of the Dog Act referred to. None of us would wish to experiment on stolen dogs; we deplore the possibility as much as anyone: admitting, however, that the State wishes us to continue our experiments (as presumably it does), for the sake of animals as well as men (witness the recent work on dogs' distemper), why should it place this ridiculous obstacle in our path and allow us and our laboratory servants (who cannot so easily speak for themselves) to be subjected to abuse and persecution for carrying out a duty which is placed upon us by the terms of our appointments in our universities or hospitals?

## AT ST. STEPHEN'S FOLLIES AND FUTILITIES

(BY OUR PARLIAMENTARY CORRESPONDENT.)

THE Session is ending with a whirlwind of Bills half discussed and mostly misunderstood. The Government has decided to close up on Wednesday, to the infinite satisfaction of the majority of all parties. Those who delay "progress" are regarded with dismay, even if they make good points, and with disgust if they attempt humour or obstruction. There is no reason why some of this undigested mass of inchoate legislation should not receive Parliamentary criticism by the extension of the life of this Session for another week, as has often been done before. Much of it will probably be found to be harmful, and much of it also to provide a fruitful field for legal wrangles and expenses in the future. Nothing can resist the desire of the overwhelming number of members to make an end of a fog-bound, futile, ignoble Parliamentary year; in which no man has made a reputation; in which Parliament has sunk lower and ever lower in the opinion of the country; in which there have been few great distinguished controversial or oratorical debates, and in which the general level has been so low that, on many of the days, most of the great newspapers have ceased to report the doings of Parliament. The members of the House of Commons, like the dying Cromwell, desire neither to eat nor drink. They desire to make what haste they can to be gone.

Here, of course, is the opportunity of the House of Lords, which for the great period since the passing of the Parliament Act has resembled nothing so much in legislation, as apart from debating, as the Gods in Valhalla in the Nibelung mythology, fallen in lack of sustenance which gave them immortal life, into a long, dreamless, and everlasting sleep. But they can now insert amendments and new clauses into House of Commons Bills which give that unfortunate assembly the alternative of accepting their measures altered or truncated, or of losing their measures altogether. Such, for example, was the Legitimacy Bill of last Monday. The Lords accepted the principle that children born before wedlock should be legitimized by the subsequent marriage of their parents, as is the law in Scotland to-day. They jibbed at the further pleasant provision that children born of one parent or another in adultery should also be legitimized. In the short debate on the subject there was a considerable amount of slop and nonsense talked upon both sides. Aged professors, like Sir Alfred Hopkinson, talked about the settlement of a ques-

tion which has been discussed for seven hundred years; quoted disastrous extracts from Tennyson's "Enoch Arden"; pleaded for the "dear little children" who came into the world with a stigma due to no fault of their own; paraphrased Madame Roland with the exclamation "O Morality, what crimes are committed in thy name"; and invited an astonished remnant of the House to imagine whether Paolo and Francesca would have been deterred from what they did by the thought that if they had a child it could never be made legitimate. On the other hand, the unfortunate Under-Secretary, Mr. Hacking, inconspicuous for argument or eloquence, seemed to consider that this clause would completely undermine what remnants of family life were left in this country, and asserted, without conviction, that if, when a man or woman were married, one or another had had a child born in adultery, "the position of the wife in such circumstances would be a very difficult one." He finally burst into a peroration no less appealing than that of Madame Roland or Paolo, evidently regarding it as appropriate to the near approach of Christmas Day, "There is one thing which makes more for happiness to children than anything else, and that is a happy home. You would not conduce to happy homes if you accepted this amendment." I doubt if this exuberant sentiment would have convinced the House, which for once was left to free voting without Whips, but for his further less emotional affirmation that without wishing to go into "deep arguments," the House of Lords' modification must be accepted or the Bill will be lost; it may be for years and it may be for ever. Whereupon the House, discontented, disgruntled, and dissatisfied, accepted the compromise; learning again the fundamental fact that all far-sighted statesmen realize and all smaller politicians resist: that in the region of Parliamentary affairs it is better to have half a loaf than no bread.

What the House can do in the matter of acceleration was exhibited last Friday. In five hours the Bill for prosecuting papers for indecent elements in reports of divorce cases, which has never been properly discussed, was shovelled through Parliament. In that five hours of the report stage, some hundred and fifty speeches were delivered. My impression was that most of these hundred and fifty speeches of two or five minutes' duration went as much to the point and contained as much "meat" as the normal twenty or fifty minutes of meandering oratory in which any private member normally indulges when he is fortunate enough once or twice a year to catch the Speaker's eye. The end was remarkable, for on Sir Ellis Hume-Williams, K.C., who at least knows from experience what he is talking about, rising to move the rejection of the Bill in a considered speech, Major Kindersley, who was in charge of it, almost immediately moved the closure on him, which Mr. Speaker promptly accepted; apparently to the satisfaction of the House. This is the first time I have ever seen the third reading of a controversial Bill suddenly truncated by the first speaker being gagged into silence before he has begun to develop his argument, and although the Noes only amounted to the contemptible number of thirty, the Ayes retained only the almost equally contemptible number of 183.

On the Bill passing to the Lords, Lord Beauchamp protested that it should receive at least some consideration before it became law. But he was countered by some gurgles from Lord Haldane, indicative of a desire of the Labour Peers to pass all Government Bills without discussion at this stage of the Session. The Bill itself is, of course, an example of one of those numerous measures which create a warm feeling among the members who support it that they are protecting the morals of the poor, while those who oppose it are gagged and hampered by the suggestion



that they are defending indecency in the popular prints. The proprietors of the great pornographic Sunday newspapers, who depend entirely on filth and garbage for their enormous circulation, will not in the least be hampered in the provision of that garbage which their readers delight to devour. They will merely substitute for long and rather dull columns of divorce proceedings long and far more stimulating accounts of the trials of Hayley Morris, police court reports on the South Wales Circuit, and other judicial records of seduction, fornication, and unnatural crime. The Bill deals with none of these; the public will continue to obtain what the public wants.

I must say one word, although belated, on the one great debate of this deplorable autumn session. The Labour Party, in lack of any leaders who are prepared to say no to counsels of insanity, put its head into the lion's mouth by moving a vote of censure on the Government for its treatment of the coal crisis. The lion promptly closed its teeth on its unfortunate victim. Hundreds of members who have not attended the House for weeks or months appeared to see the fun. People fought for seats in hitherto empty galleries; and I was told in the dining department that this was not only the best day, but the only good day they had had since the summer recess. The result was what all sensible men might have anticipated. After Mr. MacDonald had shouted out miscellaneous maledictions alike on coal-owners and Cook, amid the joyful interruptions of a triumphant Tory mob, the debate passed entirely from a consideration of the action of the Government to a consideration of the actions of the Parliamentary Labour Party. An extraordinarily moving appeal by Mr. Welsh, the Scottish miner poet, expressed in language which gave pleasure to anyone who had any sense of style, passed completely unnoticed. So also did pathetic appeals and lamentable facts presented by Mr. Stephen Walsh concerning a settlement which is no settlement, and can be but the beginning of a new war. In the afternoon Mr. Baldwin had an easy task in reading out quotations in which Cook called MacDonald a liar, and Thomas called Cook an imbecile, and MacDonald called the miners' leaders incompetent, with a suggestion, as Mr. Churchill said, that if Mr. Cook had been further away than Moscow, the adjectives would have been of more colourful character. Finally Mr. Churchill, in a dialectical subject suited to his genius, smashed, tore, and battered the wretched, inarticulate remnants of a so-called Labour Party hopelessly divided, in a speech every sentence of which was punctuated with laughter and cheers by a dominating Tory majority. So through the incompetence or cowardice of those who represent a great movement outside, the Tory Party were permitted to disperse with confidence and unity and satisfaction on the only day of debate in the whole year in which these qualities have been exhibited.

## LIFE AND POLITICS

THE Vivian Phillips dinner on Monday was an unhappy affair. Lord Grey's conscientious raking of the ashes of controversy might satisfy the fighting instincts of his friends, but it was a sorry business. There was little enthusiasm; the cheers were, I thought, without heart. I listened to it all with deepening dismay. Lord Grey is a man who has always taken his own line. But could he not for once have given way so far as to say nothing outside the pleasant task of the evening. What on earth is the good of it? What is now to become of the wretched Liberal Party when Lord Grey and his friends, men of great power and ability, renew a dying feud with such elaborate illwill, and

draw the skirts of their respectability around them like a spinster at the sight of a rat? I really think that whatever the array of fine reasons there is nothing at the bottom of it all but a very human, very deplorable hatred of one man. He is loathed and distrusted, fiercely and without hope of change. How curious it is that the man who has pre-eminently the gift of charm, who has been followed so passionately and so blindly, should be also so violently detested. I could not follow the logic of Lord Grey's attitude: as I say, I think logic and reason have little to do with it. There is this clash of temperament, which has been fostered till it is almost hysterical in its repulsion. The amazing thing in the whole controversy has been the silence of Mr. Lloyd George. He has kept quiet, against all expectation. Will he continue to do violence to his fighting instincts? I am afraid not.

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What, I asked myself as I listened, is there for the mere liberal Liberal to do? What is there for him to follow in the splendid negations of Lord Grey? I do not see any effective leadership any more in the great Whig tradition, now emptied of all meaning and message for the future. It is with the future that we have to do, but these "leaders" will not let us turn that way. I suppose Lord Grey and his friends must follow their chosen course. It runs, I fear, rather apart from the heat and burden of the only battle that matters, for these men are hopelessly wedded to the old conventions of politics in which a noble attitude was so important. Eminent figures who still debate the prunes and prisms of political deportment in a derisive world must continue their old occupation if they cannot change it for something closer to the needs of the day. Liberals have something better to do.

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There is an interesting explanation of the discrepancies in the wording of Lord Grey's speech as it is reported in different newspapers. The speech was prepared with great care, and sent beforehand to the newspaper offices. Most of the papers naturally used this version. Unfortunately, Lord Grey cannot now read even typewritten manuscript easily. What he said was a much longer, looser, and more conversational version of the terse and forcible written speech. The latter did not read like Grey at all; the former was entirely characteristic of his manner of thinking aloud. The verbatim report—there is one in the *MANCHESTER GUARDIAN*—is singularly formless even for a speech by Lord Grey; there is hardly a striking phrase in it. The speech was an extreme example of the conversational method, which in a lesser man would be intolerable, but which Lord Grey somehow makes imposing. I suppose it is the backing of character behind every sentence. Then, Lord Grey looks so imposing; he is in the grand manner, and now that Lord Oxford has retired, our finest exponent of the art of looking a statesman. He looks like a Roman Emperor of the great period, straight from a coin, and seems to need a laurel wreath and the fasces carried before him.

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It is a stock complaint of the House of Lords that they are never allowed enough time to consider the Bills which the Commons send up at the tail end of the Session. The Lords do not seem to need much time to deal with the Bill against indecent reports, which is rushing through as this is written. I suppose the Lords rather enjoy having a hit at the Press. Their grievance refers to Bills they do not like. The Bill makes a good start, and few journalists are against it. It will become inevitable in time to extend the new outline reporting to non-matrimonial cases—criminal assault and the like—which are more popular with certain papers even than divorce. (I know that the Bill tightens

up the law against indecent publication generally.) In the Commons the reporter was left out, I suppose because Labour thought it necessary to safeguard the working man from the sins of his bosses. And that is quite right: if it were left to the reporters there would be no indecent reports. Reporters perform miracles of discretion and suppression when left to themselves, but they are subject to the orders of "administrative journalists," who are afraid of losing circulation if one paper "misses" a scandal which another "splashes." The whole trouble is in this competition in exploiting the scandal of the day. The "publisher" was included, which seems to me absurd. The publisher of a paper is a sort of legal whipping-boy. He is not in the least in the position to know the details of the reports. It is not his job. I do not believe for a moment what some divorce lawyers pretend to believe, that the fear of publicity deters people from divorce. Voluminous reports, like the notorious reports of the Russell case, only deter decent folk from buying the papers in which they appear. This is a highly disinterested criticism to come from divorce lawyers.

I hope Mr. Baldwin will do the generous thing—it would also be the popular thing—and either release Mr. Arthur Jenkins or greatly reduce his sentence. It is not merely that the miners are passionately interested in his case. There is general agreement, not merely about his high character, but about the invariably moderating influence which he exercised during the troubles in South Wales. What I have heard convinces me that he simply was not the man to cause a riot; certainly there is widespread belief that the police witnesses were mistaken in attributing to him the one phrase—"I must leave it to you," addressed to the demonstrators—which caused his conviction. It would certainly pay the Government to stretch a point. The outstanding thing to remember is that we got through the coal dispute with an absence of violence that no one would have believed possible—and no thanks to Mr. Cook. I have no quarrel with Lord Birkenhead's treatment of the Labour deputation which pleaded for an amnesty. It was a tactical mistake to ask for a general release. Some of the convictions were for serious common law offences, and Lord Birkenhead took a lawyer's advantage of that. But he was sensible and even generous on the whole. Naturally he used the occasion to rub it in, the Press, for the first time during all these negotiations, having been thoughtfully invited to be present. Labour will have to make up its mind before coming into office what line it is going to take about violence in trade disputes. Lord Birkenhead can forget the lawyer and take the big human view when he likes. I trust he is taking it now behind the scenes.

Working journalists as they are called—the phrase roughly defines the men who do everything on newspapers except draw the big money—are curiously little known and understood in the world outside Fleet Street. No novelist or playwright, however careful, ever in my experience produces anything but a caricature of a reporter or sub-editor. These men, contrary to the common belief, live hard and lonely lives, full of strain and anxious effort. They have their cordial, comradely clannishness, which compensates for the popular indifference or dislike. Theirs is a dangerous trade, and the progress of amalgamations is making it rapidly more dangerous. The financial magnates who buy up papers to suppress them and to inflate the value of shares, can and do turn the editorial workers on to the street bitterly called "of adventure" with impunity. Journalists have their organizations, but these have not the coercive power of the big operative Unions. The newspaper magnates dare not treat compositors as they treat

reporters—not without being made to pay for it. I was delighted some days ago to be attending a very large and united meeting of journalists who were asserting their right to proper human treatment at the hands of the new class of newspaper financiers, who know little and care less about the grand traditions of the Press, except in so far as they can be coined. The broker is ousting the editor.

Old General Sterling, who died a few days ago, was a link with a great period of journalism, and with a great book. His grandfather was that Captain Edward Sterling famous in the early nineteenth century as "The Thunderer of the TIMES newspaper." This fact alone brings back many strange vanished memories of English public life. Still more curious is it to realize that General Sterling's father was John Sterling, of whom his friend Carlyle wrote one of the most perfect biographies in the language. The little book is an exquisite work of art, and that can be said of few of the lava-like outpourings of Carlyle. He was for once content to write peacefully, and with the most beautiful sincerity of emotion. The Sterling "Life" has had a very great influence on the writing of the short biography. Carlyle may be said to have invented his subject. The royal gift of his friendship conferred immortality upon this obscure and unhappy young man who would have been thoroughly forgotten in a few years.

The late Lord Emmott had no showy qualities. He stood steadfast as a rock for good causes. To me he always seemed perfectly expressive of the best Lancashire spirit. A quiet, slowly meditating man, utterly dependable, a leading cotton "master" he knew the industry through and through. I remember hearing that at the beginning of his business life he worked his way through all the departments of his own mills. That would be characteristic of his patient thoroughness. A point about his career which has escaped the obituary writers is the fact that he and Herbert Samuel were the backbone of the Parliamentary struggle during the great Congo agitation. Protection of the native races was with him an enduring interest.

I see that Mr. Oswald Mosley, that nimble political performer, is providing good fun for the Tories in a dull time. He is nothing if not thorough. He has cast himself for the part of a Son of Toil, and he blacks himself all over. One recalls the studied antics of Disraeli when he, too, was an earnest young careerist. Mr. Mosley also will get there. One cannot but applaud the devotion of Lady Cynthia Mosley—"Mrs." Mosley for the time being, or simply "the Missus." She has been urging that "every mother should have a nurse and send her baby to the seaside, leaving her free like we lucky people." Grammar, I suppose, is to be despised, like other conventions of the bourgeois.

KAPPA.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### POOR LAW REFORM

SIR,—May I add a few words in support of the general propositions laid down by your correspondent, Mrs. Keynes in your last issue, with special relation to the burden of rates in necessitous areas?

It is clear that no solution of the difficulty is to be found in "block" grants, or indeed in any system of "grant."

Mere doles from the Exchequer to local authorities may be ruled out as vicious and impossible.

Hitherto all attempts to find a formula by means of which necessitous areas might be given special assistance

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have failed. The more ingenious the scheme the more complicated it becomes, and simplicity in the financial relations between the Exchequer and Local Authorities is above all things to be desired. We know that a Departmental Committee has rejected as impracticable all the finely spun schemes submitted to it by representative officials in different local government areas.

Meanwhile, Mr. Neville Chamberlain is still considering when and how to institute a system of "block" grants. For all local authorities a departure from the percentage grant system is a plunge into the unknown, and its perils are infinitely enlarged if such a change is effected without any adequate and binding guarantees from the Minister that the Exchequer will contribute to Poor Law expenditure.

But it is hardly credible that a Minister with the wide and varied experience of Mr. Chamberlain can harbour the delusion that a mere change in the system of "grant," coupled with the abolition of Boards of Guardians and the transfer of their functions to County and other Local Authorities will "reform" the Poor Law and lighten the burden of rates in distressed areas.

The reform of the Poor Law becomes a mere adjustment of local government machinery if it is to be effected on the lines hitherto suggested. In saying this I do not under-rate the importance of the co-ordination of health functions at present dispensed among sundry authorities. But I agree with your correspondent that "the right division of functions is to detach relief to able-bodied persons who are destitute through lack of employment from the Poor Law proper, which deals with the various sections of the non-able-bodied, the children, the sick, the aged, and the infirm." Fifteen years' experience of Poor Law administration led me inevitably to that conclusion, and I endeavoured, though without success, to persuade the London County Council, when they were discussing the Minister's new scheme of Public Assistance, that their task will be doomed to failure from the outset if the new Public Assistance authorities are to be responsible for able-bodied unemployment.

Lift the able-bodied out of the Poor Law, make them a national responsibility, and the work of the new authorities will be free from the political pressure, sometimes amounting to intimidation, which has in some areas made administration a farce. Moreover, uniformity and equality of treatment in different parts of the country can only be attained if the able-bodied are dealt with on national lines.—Yours, &c.,

H. ARTHUR BAKER.

County Hall, Westminster Bridge.  
December 14th, 1926.

SIR,—In your issue of the 11th inst., Mrs. Keynes rightly points out that the transfer of work involved in the Poor Law Reform proposals now before the country will not cause difficulties to disappear. I ask your readers to bear this in mind in reading the last sentence of the interesting article on "The Coal Strike and the Poor Law" also in the same issue. Here we are reminded of the common law right of the destitute to relief and also of the Merthyr Tydfil judgment, which laid down the legality of relief to wives and children of men unemployed through trade disputes. The article further tells us of the breakdown of administration owing to pressure of numbers applying for relief. For had the homes of those applying for relief been visited by the Relieving Officers, as the regulations require, before relief, whether in money, kind, or medical extras, had been granted, the abuses quoted would not have occurred. The reform proposals now before the country, involving, as they do, only a transfer of responsibility and no change in the law, will not obviate similar occurrences under similar circumstances. The ordinary ratepayer, quoted in this article, as being increasingly dissatisfied with the Guardians in consequence of such a state of affairs had better consider carefully the justice of his dissatisfaction under the law as it is at present, and whether he is going to be less dissatisfied under the reform proposals. The experience of being Chairman of a Relief Committee, which I have had for many years in London, is not possible for all ratepayers, but, as they have to pay the bill, I would ask them all to study the report of the Special Committee on the Poor Law presented to the London County Council on November 2nd. I think they will

then agree with me that no reform is likely to result from such proposals, and that worse may come if they become law.—Yours, &c.,

CATHERINE FULFORD.

16, Egerton Gardens, S.W.3.  
December 12th, 1926.

## SIR THOMAS LEGGE AND LEAD PAINT

SIR,—I beg to reply to the personal items in Mr. Hugh Smith's letter of last week. If he refers to my letter in the *Times* he will see I said I voted "as representing one of the delegates." . . . Sir Daniel Hall was the delegate, and as he left Geneva the night before the Draft Convention shaped itself I voted as substitute for him.

On three points he claims that I misled the Conference. The first, my allusion to 10 per cent. as being an approximate proportion of white lead paint used internally compared with that used externally, was based on the statement of a master painter for forty years in Austria who was present, "interior painting only constitutes about 5 per cent. of all the painting that is done." His figure I doubled. If I had omitted mention of any figure the Draft Convention would have gone through. That 40 per cent. is the amount used in interiors is the statement of the white lead makers.

As to the second point, that acceptance of the compromise would have ended the agitation, I am positive I was right so far as this country was concerned, despite M. Albert Thomas's subsequent speech in Paris. But for humane men, as I believe the white lead makers to be, to say he thereby "tore up the peace," seems incredible when the welfare of some 150,000 house-painters was in question. One does not resign for words, but for deeds, although I grant words can shake and break a faith that is weak.

With the third point about waterproof sandpaper I deal later.

I have no wish to question anyone's right to his or her own opinion, but I must point out the significance of the two statements (c) and (d) in the last paragraph of Mr. Smith's letter. The quotation from the Norman Committee's report (which urged ratification) is from the portion dealing solely with the painting of buildings under the control of the *Office of Works*—an altogether different proposition from ordinary uncontrolled house painting.

Then as to the leaflet on "Painter's Colic" saying "so long as paint ready mixed with oil is used . . . painting operations involving no dry sandpapering ought to be harmless." . . . A clause in the Draft Convention called for regulations prohibiting dry rubbing down in external use of lead paint and the issue of a leaflet to the painters. The leaflet, therefore, was only meant to apply to external painting where little rubbing down is required, and that in the open air.

Now here is my principal point. After twenty-seven years of the closest experience of lead poisoning I have become convinced that only if you can bring an influence to bear external to the worker (*i.e.*, one over which he can exercise no control) will you really be successful in prevention. Examples are:—

- (1) Substitution of sesqui-sulphide of phosphorus for yellow phosphorus (achieved by the Berne Convention, regulations having proved a failure);
- (2) Conversion of pulp white lead into oil paint ready for the market in wonderful automatic closed-in machines, so successfully achieved by the white lead makers themselves;
- (3) Low solubility glaze in pottery manufacture;

and, though not quite so completely:—

- (4) Locally applied exhaust ventilation by a fan.

Examples of influences useful up to a point, but depending on the worker's will to use them, are respirators, gloves, washing accommodation, and waterproof sandpaper. The last named is useless unless wet, and before it can be used wet at least half a dozen requirements have to be fulfilled. The expression "so long as" in the leaflet of itself indicates that mention is made of an influence not external to the worker.—Yours, &c.,

T. M. LEGGE.

Steep, Petersfield.  
December 14th, 1926.

## MR. DENIS PARRY EXPLAINS

SIR,—In a recent edition of your paper you published in full a letter I sent recently to the *TIMES* upon the subject of "The Vatican and Marriage," and expressed an interest in the nature of the "communication" I had received causing this "recantation."

I am most happy at being able to enlighten you, and can only hope that you will not find the explanation too prolix.

My object in criticizing Catholic marriage laws in the *TIMES*, and this first missive of mine you refer to also, was simply and solely to draw forth replies which would tend to elucidate more abstruse points of Catholic doctrines, for the benefit of non-Catholic readers and correspondents.

All of the latter, without exception, betrayed their complete ignorance of Canon Law, and also demonstrated, very clearly, inability to grasp the true significance of Catholic teaching.

My attitude, however, caused some alarm to my Catholic friends and acquaintances, and amongst the correspondence I received as a result of my letter in the *TIMES* I was shocked to find one from a well-known bitter anti-Catholic congratulating me "upon breaking with the Church of Rome." From an avowed enemy of God this was rather more than I could stomach, and it was *this* communication which was the prime cause of my second letter to the *TIMES* and of my public "Act of Faith."

I admit freely, however, that secondary motives were also at work. The English, as a whole, fail to understand Catholic psychology, and this is the reason their long-continued efforts to subdue the Irish nation encountered ultimately such richly merited defeat. My letter served also to underline Catholic Unity, and was a clear indication to those Anglicans, now meandering about in a fog of their own creation, of the road each individual will have to travel separately in order to establish communion with the Holy See. In their case though, the Confession of Faith required will be rather fuller than my short excerpt.

The naïveté with which you admit that "the Church of Rome is still powerful" amuses me vastly. The phrase "still powerful" suggests that its strength may wane before long, whereas the truth is that it is making headway, and gathering strength, not only in this country, but in every part of the world.

Catholicism, or, to use its synonym, Christianity, will forever wage war against both error and indifference. Profiteers, non-believers, and others of this ilk in Parliament, may frame secular laws, or lay down rules for the "Church" of Henry VIII., but, quoting the words of Mgr. Moyes to the *TIMES* from memory, "as Catholics we do not permit any State, or individual, to fix for us the interpretation of Christ's laws on marriage, or on any other matter."

In short, the Church, deputizing for Jesus Christ, her Divine Founder, continues her appointed task, as indifferent to hostile Press criticisms and the mouthings of irresponsible anti-Catholic agitators, as she is to the stomachic disturbances of Dean Inge, the provincial theories of H. G. Wells, and the confused bleats of laymen such as Anglican "Bishops," Nonconformist ministers, and the like.

I might have tossed a sop to Cerberus, but a change of diet is often a very good thing.—Yours, &c.,

DENIS PARRY.

December 7th, 1926.

[It may be of service to our readers if we reproduce once more Mr. Parry's letter to the *TIMES* of November 22nd, upon which we commented:—

"SIR,—In view of a communication I have received I hasten to withdraw unreservedly all the imputations made against the just and proper functioning of the Catholic marriage laws in any letter of mine to your paper. I admit that my questions were hasty, ill-considered, wanting in proper respect, and apt to cause pain and scandal amongst my coreligionists. Also I acknowledge, further, that the Catholic, Roman, and Apostolic Church is the sole judge and arbiter on all matters concerning Christian Faith and morals, and that I was guilty of a grievous sin in seeming to question her infallible judgments in these matters. This *amende honorable* I make of my own free will, hoping you will, as an act of justice, accord it the same publicity as my first letter, which appeared under date November 18th."

—ED., NATION

## THE LAST TEN DAYS

SIR,—In your very interesting article you have dealt with those critics who urge that Sir Edward Grey should have announced that in the event of war this country would be found by the side of France, and you have assumed for the purpose of the argument that the announcement had prevented war. You suggest very forcibly that the resultant situation would have been a very dangerous one for us. But quite possibly an early declaration that we would enter a combination against Germany would not have prevented war, and, in that case, would not the moral position of the Entente have been seriously compromised? The Austrians had a strong *prima facie* case against Serbia. We would have prejudged that case and would have given immense weight to the charge that we had effected the encirclement of Germany. The moral handicap which was fatal to Germany would have been transferred to the Entente, our relations with the United States would have been made immensely difficult, and the dreaded embargo on the export of war material might have been imposed. Sir Edward Grey's impassioned appeal for a Conference seems to have been the only right course; the other would have meant a divided Cabinet, a distracted nation, and eventual defeat.—Yours, &c.,

CHAS. WRIGHT.

## MR. J. M. ROBERTSON AND SHAKESPEARE

SIR,—I was not aware of "Kappa's" contribution to Mr. J. M. Robertson's birthday party until I read Mr. Middleton Murry's letter in the *NATION* of December 4th. If it is not too late to intervene, I should be glad to express my cordial agreement with Mr. Murry's protest. "Kappa's" original comment appears to have been in indifferent taste in the choice of an occasion: but he now carries the controversy beyond the limits of his sneer at Mr. Robertson. The "Kappa" programme, in fact, seems to comprehend a sweeping out of the temple of Shakespeare of such insignificant insects as Professor Pollard, and Professor Dover Wilson, and anyone who has attempted to clear up any of the problems of that bewildering epoch.

No more than "Kappa" do I profess "to have an expert's acquaintance," but at least I have studied these problems. I write as a literary critic who has, like Mr. Murry, paid some attention to this period of English literature; and I am convinced that no literary critic who is concerned with this period to-day can afford to neglect the work of such scholars as those I have mentioned. "Kappa" is, on the other hand, a true Conservative: he likes things to be left as they are. That is to say, since we cannot *prove* to his satisfaction who is responsible for "Titus Andronicus," we should continue to dishonour the name of Shakespeare with the ascription. "Kappa" may have reason to be satisfied with his own "aesthetic instinct." I refuse to surrender myself to the mercy of the "aesthetic instinct" of Coleridge, who can talk glibly about "Richard II." and "Richard III." without mentioning the name of Marlowe.—Yours, &c.,

T. S. ELIOT.

Russell Square, London, W.C.1.

December 6th, 1926.

## FAITH AND THE SLAVE TRADE

SIR,—Mr. Lee is not, I think, fair in his reply. Taking a sentence or two from one of my articles as a text, he wrote that "intelligence was hopelessly wrong" and "faith" right about the abolition of slavery. That is not true. Christian sentiment was partly responsible for freeing the slaves, and I said so in my letter. But many irreligious people fought against slavery, just as many religious people supported slavery. My quotation was made in order to establish that fact and not to prove that "Christian sentiment was not responsible for the freeing of the slaves." Nor did I ever claim "superiority" for unbelief in the matter of abolition.—Yours, &c.,

LEONARD WOOLF.



## GENEVA FELLOWSHIP SCHOOL

SIR,—Sir D. M. Stevenson sent me a copy of his letter in your issue of October 9th headed "An International School," and I have pleasure in giving further particulars which he believes will be of interest to your readers.

The Fellowship School, as it is called, is beautifully situated on the banks of the Lake at Gland, near Geneva. It was founded in October, 1921, its main object, as expressed in a preliminary notice, being "to make some contribution to the world's peace . . . by gathering together children of all races and nationalities to be educated in an atmosphere of friendliness and pacifism."

During the past five years seventy-seven boys and girls from three to nineteen years of age and of fourteen nationalities, including Japanese and negro, have worked in the school. Ten pupils have been successfully prepared for entrance to different universities. The school naturally concentrates on language teaching, English and French being kept as nearly as possible parallel in the daily life. Frequent school journeys to neighbouring countries help very much in the international side of the work, and we take advantage of our nearness to Geneva to awaken interest in the various activities of the League of Nations.

The above-mentioned notice also states: "The founders believe that a pacifist education involves the free, full, and spontaneous development of each child's personality in such a way that it may come into sympathetic and vital relations with other personalities and forces in the world, and so achieve moral harmony." Our five years' experience has established and grounded us in this faith. We have found that when free and healthy relations are established between

the grown-ups and the children there is the same kind of discipline and harmony as between the mother and the baby she is nursing. Children come as naturally to elders for intellectual help as for their dinner. In the achievement of this kind of co-operation an international school has an immense advantage in that teachers are often also learners. I have seen a grey-haired mistress carefully studying the accent of a Parisian child of four, and such incidents are of daily and natural occurrence amongst us.

Among our strongest features are music and dramatic work, including a special kind of dramatic eurythmics, which has grown out of a wish to entertain our neighbours, qualified by limitations of language. As children and teachers all take part in the production and representation of these pageants, they are also a great help to the spirit of fellowship which we are trying to realize in our little community.

The average number of pupils is twenty-five, who have either to find or to get found for them £90 per annum for board and education. The school has had as many as thirty-four pupils at a time; it is hoped to increase its capacity up to forty, but for this additional funds are required.

There are twelve resident teacher-workers, who are content with board and lodging plus £50 per annum, as they look upon their occupation at the school as a labour of love. The yearly fees of the visiting staff amount to £140.

The Secretary, Miss Mabel Tothill, of Little Orchard, Sandford, Bristol, will be glad to give further information to any friends interested, and, of course, I am always at their service.—Yours, &c.,

EMMA THOMAS.

"Les Rayons," Gland.

## GENIUS

BY VIRGINIA WOOLF

"GENIUS," cried Haydon, darting at his canvas after some momentary rebuff, "Genius is sent into the world not to obey laws, but to give them!" But he need not have said it. Genius is written large all over his memoirs.\* It is genius of a peculiar kind of course. It is not the Shakespearean but the Victorian genius, not the conscious but the unconscious, not the true, but—let us pause, however, and read Haydon's diaries with attention (they are now reprinted, with a brilliant introduction by Mr. Huxley) before we decide what kind of genius his was. That it was violent in its symptoms and remorseless in its severity no one can doubt. Of all those men and women who have been stricken with genius (and the number in the British Isles must be great) none suffered more, or was more terribly its victim than the inspired boy with weak eyes who should have been a bookseller in his father's shop in Plymouth but heard himself summoned to go to London, to be a great painter, to honour his country, and to "rescue the Art from that stigma of incapacity which was impressed on it."

He came to London. He made friends with Wilkie. He lived and painted in one room, and there, night after night, Wilkie, Du Fresne, Dr. Millingen, McClaggan, Allan ("the celebrated painter"), and Callender all met and drank his good tea out of his large cups, and argued about art and politics and divinity and medicine and how Marie Antoinette's head was cut off (Du Fresne said he had been present and had flung his red cap into the air), while Liz of Rathbone Place, who loved their talk, but was otherwise cold, sided with one, attacked another, and was found studying "Reid on the Human Mind" "with an expression of profound bewilderment." "Happy period!" Haydon burst out, "no servants—no responsibilities—reputation on the bud—ambition beginning, friends un-

tried," and so things might have gone on had it not been for the demon which possessed him—the devil which made him, even in those early days, indite letters, which Liz applauded, against the might of the Royal Academy, and vow to bring about their humiliation and the triumph of High Art by vast pictures of Dentatus and Macbeth and Solomon which took months to paint, filled his living-room with the reek of oil, required that he should dissect the forequarters of an ass, bring Guardsmen on their horses into his studio, and run into debt for, as he soon found out "the expenses of a work of High Art in England are dreadful."

But there was another consequence of his prepossession. High Art being of necessity large art into the bargain, only the great nobles could afford it, and in consequence the simple life with Liz and cups of good tea was abandoned for the life, or at least the dinner tables, of the Mulgraves and the Beaumonts and any other lord or lady who could be hypnotized into the belief that it was their wish to have a vast picture of Achilles in the drawing-room, and to their credit to have a man of genius talking very loud at their board. Haydon, rapt in his burning enthusiasm for the Heroic and for the Elgin Marbles and for himself, took it all seriously. He entertained fashion all day long. Instead of painting, "I walked about my room, looked into the glass, anticipated what the foreign ambassadors would say," overheard whispers at parties "he himself has an antique head," and seriously believed, when the beauties put up their eyeglasses and lisped their admiration, that his fortune was made, and that "all the sovereigns of Europe would hail with delight an English youth who could paint an heroic picture." But he was disillusioned. The great, he found, care not for art, but for what people say about pictures. "Dear Lord Mulgrave" lost his faith in Dentatus when he heard it criticized. Sir George Beaumont shilled and shallied and said at last that Macbeth

\* The Autobiography and Memoirs of Benjamin Robert Haydon. With an Introduction by Aldous Huxley. Two vols. (Peter Davies, 21s.)

was too big and Lady Beaumont had no room for it, and, "in fact, Sir George was tired, and wanted another extraordinary young man, for Wilkie was an old story, and I was a nuisance." "And so, artists," he concluded, summing up all that he had borne from his patrons, but letting us infer too how boldly he had corrected them and how terribly he had bored them, "And so, artists, be humble and discreet!"

He proved the wisdom of his own saying by marrying, in spite of his debts, a widow with two children, and by having, in quick succession, six more children of his own. With all this weight on his shoulders he sank steadily more and more deeply into the mud. For his genius never deserted him. It was always flourishing irresistible subjects before his eyes. He was always rushing at his canvas and "rubbing in" the head of Alexander "gloriously," or dashing off some gigantic group of warriors and lions when his room was bare of necessities, his furniture pawned, his wife screaming in childbirth, and the baby (it was a way they had) sickening of a mortal illness. Where a smaller man would have been content to deal with private difficulties, Haydon took upon himself the cares of the world. He was feverishly interested in politics, in the Reform Bill, in the Trades Union movement, in the success of the British arms. Above all, he was the champion of High Art in England. He must badger Wellington, Peel, and every Minister in turn to employ young English painters to decorate Westminster Hall and the Houses of Parliament. Nor could he let the Royal Academy sleep in peace. His friends begged him to stop: but no. "The idea of being a Luther or a John Knox in art got the better of my reason. . . . I attacked the Academy. I exposed their petty intrigues; I laid open their ungrateful, cruel, and heartless treatment of Wilkie. I annihilated Payne Knight's absurd theories against great works. I proved his ignorance of Pliny," with the result that "I had brought forty men and all their high connections, on my back at twenty-six years old, and there was nothing left but Victory or Westminster Abbey. I made up my mind for the conflict, and ordered at once a larger canvas for another work."

But on the road to Victory and Westminster Abbey lay a more sordid lodging-house, through which Haydon passed four times—the King's Bench prison. Servants and children, he noted, became familiar with the signs of an approaching execution. He himself learnt how to pawn and how to plead, how to flatter the sheriff's officer, how to bombard the great who were certainly generous if they were not clever; how to appeal to the hearts of landlords, whose humanity was extraordinary; but one thing he could not do; deny the demands of his own genius. Portrait painting was an obvious resource. But then how odious to paint a little private individual, a mere Mayor, or Member of Parliament, when one's head was swarming with Solomons and Jerusalems and Pharaohs and Crucifixions and Macbeths! He could scarcely bring himself to do it. One could make them larger than life, it is true, but then the critics sneered, and said that if the ex-Mayor was the size that Haydon painted him he must have stuck in the doorway. It was paltry work. "The trash that one is obliged to talk! The stuff that one is obliged to copy! The fidgets that are obliged to be borne! My God!"

The name of God was often on his lips. He was on terms of cordial intimacy with the deity. He could not believe that one great spirit could consent to the downfall of another. God and Napoleon and Nelson and Wellington and Haydon were all of the same calibre, all in the grand style. His mind harped on these great names constantly. And, as a matter of fact, though poor Mrs. Haydon would smile when he bade her "trust in God" his trust was often justified. He left his house in the morning with the

children fighting, with Mary scolding, with no water in the cistern, to trudge all day from patron to pawn-shop, and came home at night, "tired, croaking, grumbling, and muddy," when, just as hope seemed extinct, a letter arrived; it was from Lord Grey; it contained a cheque. Once more they were saved.

With it all, he declared, he was a very happy man, pink and plump, in spite of all his worries, when Wilkie, who led an abstemious bachelor's life, was cadaverous and plaintive. Now and again they took the children to the sea, or snatched an afternoon in Kensington Gardens, and if they were in the depths of despair on Wednesday, likely enough some stroke of fortune would put them in the seventh heaven by Thursday. He had his friends too—Wordsworth and Scott and Keats and Lamb—with whom he supped and he talked. He had, above all, a mind which was for ever tossing and tumbling like a vigorous and active dolphin in the seas of thought. "I never feel alone," he wrote. "With visions of ancient heroes, pictures of Christ, principles of ancient Art, humorous subjects, deductions, sarcasms against the Academy, piercing remembrance of my dear children all crowding upon me, I paint, I write, conceive, fall asleep . . . lamenting my mortality at being fatigued." The power which drove him to these extremities did at least reward him with some of its delights.

But as the symptoms of inspiration multiply—this passionate joy in creation, this conviction of a divine mission—one asks oneself what then is false, for falsity there certainly seems to be. First there is something in the superabundance of protest, in the sense of persecution which rouses suspicion; next these vast pictures of crowds, armies, raptures, agonies begin, even as he sketches them in words, to scar and wound our eyes; and finally we catch ourselves thinking, as some felicity of phrase flashes out, or some pose or arrangement makes its effect, that his genius is a writer's. He should have held a pen; of all painters, surely he was the best read. "The truth is I am fonder of books than of anything else on earth," he wrote. He clung to his Shakespeare and his Homer when his lay figure had to go to the pawnbroker. There was even one moment when he doubted his own vocation and accused the sublime art of hampering his powers. But his instinct to express himself in words was undeniable. Overworked as he was, he always found time to write a diary which is in no way perfunctory, but follows with ease and sinuosity the ins and outs of his life. Phrases form naturally at the tip of his pen. "He sat and talked easily, lazily, gazing at the sun with his legs crossed," he says of Chantrey. "Poor fellow," he wrote on hearing of the burial of Wilkie at sea, "I wonder what the fish think of him, with their large glassy eyes in the gurgling deep." Always his painter's eye lights up his phrases, and scenes which would have been repulsive in paint shape themselves naturally and rightly into words. It was some malicious accident that made him, when he had to choose a medium, pick up a brush when the pen lay handy.

But if accident it was, his genius was unrelenting. Paint he must; paint he did. When his cartoons were rejected he learnt to toss off pictures of Napoleon Musing at the rate of one in two hours and a half. When the public deserted his last exhibition in favour of Tom Thumb next door, he darted at another picture, finished the Saxon Lord, dashed in Alfred, "worked," he declared, "gloriously." But at last even his prayers sound a little hoarse, and his protests without conviction. One morning after quoting Lear and writing out a list of his debts and his thoughts, he put a pistol to his forehead, gashed a razor across his throat, and spattered his unfinished picture of Alfred and the first British Jury with his blood. He was the faithful servant of his genius to the last. If we seek



now any relic of all those acres of canvas, those crowds of heroes, we find clean white walls, people comfortably dining, and a vague rumour that a big picture did hang here once, but the management took it away when the place was done up. The pictures are vanished; Allan, "the celebrated painter," Du Fresne, who saw Marie Antoinette executed, Millingen, Liz of Rathbone Place, are all passed away; but still these pages that he scribbled without thought of Genius or Art or Posterity remain holding vividly before us the struggling, greedy life with all its black smoke and its flame.

## IMPORTUNATE SWALLOWS

THE swallows had built their nest on one of the beams of the garage, near the apex of the roof. The doors of the garage were closed at night, and opened, as a rule, every morning at or about 6.30 a.m., but the swallows had another way out through a window at the side. It is not a glazed window, but just a frame with hinged wooden shutters, intended to meet in the middle. The shutters, which are a bad fit, were pulled together and attached to one another with a strap, leaving a narrow gap between them. In this position they projected some inches over the outside wall. On the inside there was a sill upon which the swallows could perch, and from which they could dive under the projecting shutters. Outside there was no sill, so the birds had a perfectly easy way out, but could not use the exit as an entrance, for they could not fly through the narrow gap, and to get up under the shutters they would have had to creep up the straight wall and find a way in from the bright light outside to the comparative darkness within.

Our house is a tiny cottage with rooms proportionately small. Early one Sunday morning we were roused by the swallows flying twittering round our bedroom. We had never had a similar visit from them, and we wondered sleepily why they had come in, and, still wondering, fell asleep again. When, later on, a servant brought in early morning tea, the swallows were again flying about the room, but they left by the window shortly before the servant went out, and we saw no more of them for the time being.

During breakfast the servant came in and said: "I cannot make out what is wrong with our swallows; they are flying in and out of the scullery and kitchen in a great fuss." Then it occurred to us that their entry was something more than a mere friendly visit, and we went out to see what the trouble was. We walked towards the garage, closely followed by the swallows, who exhibited clear symptoms of excitement and anxiety. The chauffeur had gone off on an errand we had forgotten, and the garage door was shut. Then we realized the cause of the swallows' excitement. The key was procured and before the door was fully opened, in fact as soon as there was a gap wide enough for them to pass through, both swallows flew past us straight up to the nest.

We left them in peace for an hour or so, then took a ladder and looked into the nest, where we found, as we expected, the newly hatched young. Before the young were hatched it did not greatly matter whether the garage door was open or not, but, when they were hatched, it became a matter of life and death that they should be constantly fed. They survived the temporary deprivation of food, and, from that day onwards, until they were capable of taking care of themselves, the window of the garage was kept open so that the parent birds might be independent of the door.

The intelligence of animals and their capacity for deductive reasoning is the subject of unending argument. Surely it cannot be doubted that our swallows came into the cottage with a set purpose, that they intended to draw the attention of persons whom they felt to be friendly to their plight, that they reasoned with themselves, "These are the people who open the door and would open it now if they knew that it was shut: somehow we must make them open it." At any rate, so far as our knowledge goes, the swallows never had come into the cottage before, and they never have entered it since.

M. G.

## THE DRAMA MANLY WYCHERLEY

Everyman Theatre: "The Country Wife." By WILLIAM WYCHERLEY.

"THE COUNTRY WIFE" has not been seen in recognizable form on a public stage since it was given at Drury Lane on November 28th, 1748. Let us begin then by congratulating ourselves and the Everyman Theatre on the breaking down of one hundred and eighty years of mock modesty. Perhaps it is worth living even in the twentieth century if we may admire without a blush:—

"The satire, wit, and strength of manly Wycherley."

In truth the "Country Wife" is one of the great comedies, of the world, not a superficial, gay, frivolous, wicked little trifle, too paltry and despicable for a serious age, but the savage onslaught of an angry man on society and its abuses; and hence it may be truly argued that the nineteenth century diverted their eyes, through mock modesty and not through virtue.

So strongly did an ethical frenzy run through the mind of Wycherley that the "Country Wife" is the only play in which the art and the morality of the dramatist were perfectly blended. How boring is the "Plain Dealer," with its angry railings, its almost senile cursing of everything under the sun. Its bad temper wears one out before the play is half finished. But "The Country Wife" is a perfect thing. At first sight, certainly, it seems the bright, flippant, tawdry butterfly, which flutters hither and thither in the glitter of the footlights, anxious only to show off its particoloured wings. But the more we look, the grimmer and the larger, and the more sinister it becomes till at length what we had thought to be a butterfly has become "Apollyon straddling right across the way."

For this revival the Everyman Theatre has been well served by Miss Isabel Jeans and Miss Athene Seyler, who give performances of the Country Wife and of Lady Fidget, which are not without genius. The fashionable woman and the woman who hopes to become fashionable could not have been more brilliantly conceived. They carry the whole performance on their backs, as far as that be possible, and whenever they are on the scene, no one can complain. It is sad to have to admit however that the merit of this particular revival begins and ends with these two performances. When the "Phoenix Society" revived the "Country Wife," Mr. Balliol Holloway took the part of "dear, dear, poor, dear Mr. Horner," and a wonderful, grim, horrible thing he made of it, all lechery, cruelty, and lies. What a pity he was not able to appear again! On this occasion Mr. Philip Desborough conceives the rôle as that of an innocent Etonian, who has bitten off more than he can chew. The play shrinks terribly under this treatment. All the rage and universality and a great part of the interest goes out of it. Who can care what are the successes or the failures of Mr. Horner, now just a foolish rake amongst a pack of silly women? We sink to the "dear old Charlie" level at once. The acting of the other parts was undistinguished, and the *décor*, to my eyes, unpleasing, while the general production seemed conspicuous by its absence. Still one may justifiably suppose that Mr. Wade was handicapped, not only by the smallness of the stage, but also by his actors, since he was the producer of "The Country Wife" for the Phoenix Society. He may have hoped

to make the play popular by producing it in this amateur and slipshod manner, where heartiness makes up for grace.

Everyone would naturally wish to be as sympathetic as possible with a management that has the courage to put on the "Country Wife" after one hundred and eighty years. But, as nobody knew better than Wycherley, the way to hell is paved with good intentions. For great plays need great pains taken with the production, the *décor*, and the acting. They need a keen sense of proportion, a due estimate of all the parts that go to the making of the whole, and an intuitive sense of the author's intention in writing the play. At the Everyman Theatre, we have two women of genius, and the rest nowhere. Who, after seeing this extraordinary medley, would have realized that Wycherley had put his moral into the mouth of a waiting-maid?

"LUCY: Can there be a greater cheat or wrong done to a man, than to give him your person and not your heart? I should make a conscience of it.

"ALITHEA: I'll retrieve it for him after I am married a while.

"LUCY: The woman that marries to love better, will be as much mistaken as the wench that marries to live better. No, Madam, marrying to increase love is like gaming to become rich: alas, you only lose what little stock you had before."

Yet any production which does not make this truth plain, may be said to have missed the mark.

FRANCIS BIRRELL.

## PLAYS AND PICTURES

"GRANNY," the new Scots comedy at the Royalty Theatre, is one of those entertainments that make me regret I ever took to a course of vice. How jolly it would be to be stirred by "Granny's" puerile humours and unsophisticated sentiment, the strong-minded, wise, and comprehending invalid, her dear old feckless puberawler of a husband, her children and her grandchildren, and the "eternal boy" bent over his crossword puzzles. Have the Scots, that most grimly intellectual of nations, really got such a childish side to their natures as one would deduce from "Granny"? Or are they only trying to extract "hawbees" from the simple Southerner? I suspect the latter, as I perceived but few Scotsmen in the theatre. But I was also told that this was because the Scots had all gone home for Hogmanay. However this may be, lucky is the man who can enjoy "Granny," for he has not lost his innocence!

The trouble with "The Triumph of Neptune," the new English pantomime Ballet, is that there is too much mime and too little ballet. It is, quite often, the sequence of gesture, rather than the gesture itself, that determines under which category it shall fall, dancing or mime; and they lie as close together as beauty and caricature. Beauty gains a whole new world when its domain borders on caricature; it is brought fresh life by its strangeness of proportion. Mime is rooted in legend and dancing in ritual; but the larger the significance of gesture the nearer it comes to ritual than legend. The modern ballet is, to a great extent, dependent on both. That is, perhaps, where Massine showed his genius, by appropriating mime and making dance out of it. Of course, on the programme, "The Triumph of Neptune" is called pantomime, nevertheless, it depends hardly at all on dumb show; one feels it would have been more satisfactory if the ballet had taken complete charge. The scenery was far too rich in ideas, and so strong in tradition and style, that it quite dwarfed the puny efforts of the world moving in front of it. The world of tinsel pictures is one we have all taken pleasure in exploring, and one feels that a Massine could have made much of those big gestures that strike out of the printed page. In some ways, though the whole thing implied taste, it was singularly lacking in taste, for taste has to be re-created to live, or die, with stinking in the nostrils. Picasso may take a common hat-peg and create a whole world from it. A hat or coat-peg, once the artist has used it for creation, is as honourable and acceptable as a musical signature; to

which it bears some resemblance. Indeed, the material for "The Three-Cornered Hat" is poor compared with that for "The Triumph of Neptune," but there is little doubt where the real triumph lies. The scenery in the latter is well matured and of undeniable loveliness, but apart from the tableaux little is added to it.

Mr. D. H. Lawrence's early play, "The Widowing of Mrs. Holroyd," was performed last Sunday by the Three Hundred Club branch of the Stage Society. Some of the acting was extremely fine, notably that of Miss Marda Vane as Mrs. Holroyd, and Mr. Oliver Crombie as her husband. Mr. Colin Keith-Johnston was also good, while Master Earle and Miss Moore could give points to many grown-up actors. The first two acts of this play are extraordinarily good. The bare life is filled with that astonishing vitality Mr. Lawrence can put into his best work. This is not realism, but reality shorn of everything irrelevant to the emotional issue. These acts, crisp yet weighted, have that real literary quality which comes of fidelity to the truth imaginatively grasped: they are dramatic and moving. But since we were thus wrought up to the level of tragedy, the collapse of the third act was desolating. It is hard to say which was the more to blame, Mr. Lawrence, or his producer, Mr. Esmé Percy. Whenever Mr. Percy deals with death, he makes the pace funereal, which was in this case the very worst thing that could have been done. Where skilful production might have saved the play, and left us with a sense of its fine quality, here the decline was exaggerated: there crept in the gross sentimentality of a Hecuba turned oyster-wench. But the fault was partly Mr. Lawrence's: he allowed himself to be obsessed by the idea of the corpse, and left the emotional core of the play unresolved. A vague intellectual idea spoils the impulsive unity of the rest, where the mind really had been at work. It was the idea of a corpse, not of death. The fact of death might momentarily have blotted out the passions in play, and this effect could possibly have been obtained if the Grandmother had uttered her words as a raging outburst. Moreover, photographic, not imaginative, realism, obtruded itself here. Still, it was an immensely interesting, even exciting, evening. Mr. Lawrence has made enormous strides between this play and "David," which reads like a masterpiece, and which this Society is to give us an opportunity of seeing.

The story of Flecker's "Hassan," one would have thought, should make a good film, but the version of it shown at the Plaza Cinema, though not actually dull, is disappointing. The plot of the original has both the right kind of thrill and the right kind of humour, but the film neglects its opportunities and takes no advantage of this, all the elements of the plot being boiled down in such a way as to make them as dull and unoriginal as possible. The usual happy ending had, of course, to be introduced: the lovers are rescued in the nick of time from having their heads cut off, by the mob which has risen against the tyranny of the Caliph and invaded his palace. The dresses and architecture are in faithful accordance with the usual theatrical and film conventions of the Orient; the acting, in general, is competent and undistinguished. The Caliph, played by a Chinaman, whose appearance, at least, is effective, has become a mere lecherous and sadistic old gentleman; Pervaneh is as obvious a blonde American film star as can be, with no suggestion of the East, either in her manners or appearance; and that excellent actor Mr. Ernest Torrence is at times amusing, but rather at sea, in the part of "Hassan."

Things to see or hear in the coming week:—

Saturday, December 18.—Royal Choral Society, Carols, at 2.30, at the Royal Albert Hall.

Sunday, December 19.—Mr. S. K. Ratcliffe on "The Conflict of Race and Colour," at 11, at South Place.

Mr. F. S. Marvin on "A Pilgrim's Progress in India and Ceylon," at 5, at the Indian Students' Union. Film Society, at 2.30, at the New Gallery Kinema. "Twopence Coloured," at the Apollo (Venturers' Society).



Monday, December 20.—Glastonbury Players in "Bethlehem," at the Church House, Westminster.  
 "A Midsummer Night's Dream" (Matinées), at the Winter Garden.  
 Christmas Circus, at Olympia.  
 "Paris Nights," at the "Q."  
 Tuesday, December 21.—Irene Scharrer, Chopin recital, at 8.15, at Wigmore Hall.  
 "Charley's Aunt," at St. James's.  
 Wednesday, December 22.—"Aladdin," at the Palladium.  
 "Peter Pan" (Matinées), at the Adelphi.  
 Miss Jean Sterling Mackinlay's Children's Christmas Matinées, at 2.30, at the Polytechnic.  
 Thursday, December 23.—Mr. Laurence Cowen's "Biddy," at the Fortune Theatre.  
 Molnar's "Liliom," at the Duke of York's.  
 "The Private Secretary," at the Kingsway.  
 Friday, December 24.—"The Snow Queen," at the New Scala.  
 OMICRON.

## IMPOSSIBLE EPITAPHS

### THE RECTOR.

He was familiar with the Classics' graces :  
 But he could never recognize our faces.

### THE MINISTER.

Too good for clever men, too clever for good,  
 He died untimely, poor, misunderstood.

### THE DOCTOR.

He, who on wealthier patients loved to call,  
 Now finds his heavenly mansion rather small.

### THE LAWYER.

To bully him was what you had to do;  
 For, if you didn't, he would bully you.

### THE PROFITEER.

So blatant was he and so falsely proud,  
 That he could make his garden flowers look loud.

### THE NOVELIST.

Alas, she never learned the way to do it :  
 And, though she never learned, she never knew it.

### THE OLD MAN.

Grateful for death, his wife reposes :  
 And yet he really loved his roses.

### THE OLD WOMAN.

She probed our characters, and always knew  
 The very worst that could be said was true.

### THE GARDENER.

His garden failed, in dry and rainy seasons :  
 But what he always could supply was reasons.

### THE CHARWOMAN.

If she is now in heaven, the place must be  
 An endless gossip and a cup of tea.

MARK ASH.

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## THE WORLD OF BOOKS

## COBDEN AND COBDENISM

IN writing "Richard Cobden and Foreign Policy" (Allen & Unwin, 12s. 6d.), Mr. W. H. Dawson has produced not only an admirable study of Cobden's attitude towards the international problems of his day, but a book which should be read and studied by all who wish to get their own thoughts clear about foreign policy to-day. Mr. Dawson's method is to give a detailed account of the policy which Cobden advocated towards such questions as non-intervention, arbitration, colonization, imperialism, the Crimean War, the American Civil War, the Eastern question, and then to draw a moral; and his moral is the application of Cobden's principles to the world of States as it has been left by the Great War and the treaties of peace.

\* \* \*

Such a method has great advantages, though it is not without considerable dangers, which must be touched upon later. It makes Cobden and his policy extremely alive and vivid, and it is more suitable to him than it would be to many Victorian politicians. Though he never held office, Cobden showed that he had more genius for statesmanship than any other Englishman who lived after Castlereagh and Canning. He was essentially a practical man who never for an instant relaxed his hold upon the details and facts of a particular set of circumstances and a particular problem. But unlike most "practical men," his horizon was never limited by a particular problem and its facts; he was at home in details and statistics, but he also had a wide view, an imaginative conception, of what the world of States and nations and peoples actually was and might become in his day. Finally he had the instincts of a civilized man, instincts which are far rarer and more remarkable in politics than is usually imagined. The statesmanship of most statesmen has been materially influenced by the crude instincts of pugnacity, cupidity, and fear—the three gods of the jungle and savagery; and the history of Europe and of imperialism and nationalism during the nineteenth century is largely a record of the results of policy directed by these instincts. When Emile de Girardin called Cobden "an international man," he drew attention to the fact that his political instincts were different from those of his own and of our generations. To abandon the relations of States and peoples to the direction of pugnacity, cupidity, and fear, even when they were decorated with the name of patriotism, shocked Cobden. His desire for international goodwill and peace and prosperity was an active desire, and, in his opinion, such a desire should be the primary determinant of all foreign policy.

\* \* \*

It happened that for the greater part of Cobden's active political life, the policy of Britain was directed or dominated by a statesman whose policy and instincts were the exact antithesis of Cobden's. Palmerston, when he surveyed the world of States, was always terrified that some nation somewhere was taking something or depriving Britain of the opportunity to take something, and the thought of either of these catastrophes roused his pugnacity. In 1854, largely owing to Palmerston and his protégé, Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, Britain drifted into the Crimean War. How or why the country was allowed to drift into what is admitted to have been a completely meaningless war has been a subject of astonishment and dispute ever since. Light is thrown upon this problem by a letter which

Palmerston wrote to Hobhouse fourteen years before the outbreak of the Crimean War, and which is published for the first time in Mr. Guedalla's "Palmerston." On July 14th, 1840, Palmerston wrote:—

"It seems pretty clear that, sooner or later, the Cossack and the Sepoy, the man from the Baltic and he from the British Islands, will meet in the centre of Asia. It should be our business to take care that the meeting should take place as far off from our Indian possessions as may be convenient and advantageous to us. But the meeting will not be avoided by our staying at home to receive the visit."


This is a good and early example of the doctrine of the preventive or defensive war of which the twentieth century has heard and experienced much. When statesmen like Palmerston hold power and such views, one need not look much further for the origin of meaningless wars in the Crimea. But the point is that the postulates, the argument, and the instinct behind this policy of Palmerston was anathema to Cobden, and all through his life he was forced to attack the opposite of Cobdenism embodied in the person and policy of Palmerston.

\* \* \*

Mr. Dawson fully recognizes these facts, but it is doubtful whether he allows sufficiently for them when he comes to consider the application of Cobdenism to the international world of to-day. Take, for instance, the crucial principle of "non-intervention." In the forefront of a sane and civilized foreign policy Cobden put this principle of non-intervention, and Mr. Dawson seems to argue that his doctrine is applicable to-day, and that Britain should revert to the Cobdenian system of non-intervention. But here Mr. Dawson does not seem to think or write with his usual clarity. Cobden's principle of non-intervention was a direct reaction against the policy of Palmerston. Palmerston was always crusading about Europe interfering in the affairs of other nations or between other nations. Just as he would not "stay at home to receive the visit" of the Cossack, which he feared or imagined, so he would not, as Cobden said, stay at home and look after his own affairs and put his own house in order, but was always truculently insisting upon his duty to go abroad and set someone else's house in order. Non-intervention to Cobden meant therefore mainly non-interference in the internal affairs of other nations. But the non-intervention which Mr. Dawson discusses as applicable to-day is a very different thing; it is a policy on the part of this country of non-intervention in the affairs of Europe. It is true that Cobden wished to see "as little intercourse as possible between the Governments; as much connection as possible between the nations of the world"; but here again the reason for his policy was his mistrust of Governments directed by men like Palmerston. Personally I cannot believe that Cobden, the "international man," if he had lived to-day, would not have seen that the only hope of civilization lies in some international organization of States and Governments, like the League. But a policy of complete non-intervention, in Mr. Dawson's sense, which would be a policy of splendid isolation, is simply incompatible with membership of the League. We may wash our hands of the affairs of Europe, but then we must wash our hands of the League. Cobden would have been against the League in 1856, but I do not think that he would be so in 1926, for the world of 1926 is as different from that of 1856 as the war of 1914 was different from that of 1854.

LEONARD WOOLF.





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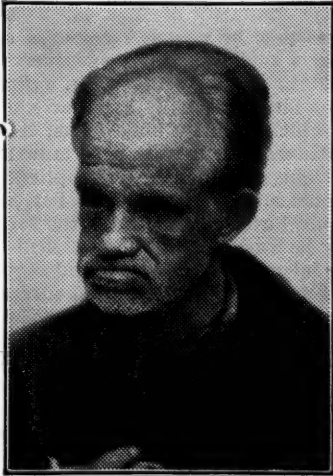
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## REVIEWS

## WHITMAN AND TENNYSON

**Whitman: An Interpretation in Narrative.** By EMORY HOLLOWAY. (Knopf. £1 1s.)

THIS book is in no way a critical examination of Whitman's work; it has nothing to say—thank God!—about Whitman's influence upon *vers libre* and contemporary American verse; it is silent about Whitman's present standing in American literature. Mr. Van Wyck Brooks would have made the subject the occasion for an elegy, Mr. Mencken for a diatribe upon democracy. Mr. Holloway's subject is "Whitman the Man" and his environment, and he keeps to the matter in hand. The book is written in an artless style, which ends by pleasing; and in the end we think of all the things the book might have been and is not, and give the author thanks. It is, I should suppose, as good a *biography* of Whitman as has been written, or is likely to be. For it makes us realize (and I am sure that this is a token of its merit) that a critical appreciation of Whitman's poetry must take account of place and time. And this the book does without pretending to make any critical estimate itself. It is a modest and efficient book.

The time, of course, is the epoch of American history known to readers of "Martin Chuzzlewit." To most Europeans, I imagine, this is a time which hardly exists; its difference, that is, from the Colonial Period (which we may say ended in 1829 with the defeat of Adams by Jackson) on the one hand, and the Age of Jazz on the other. But with relation to Whitman, it must be recognized that his was a time with a character of its own, and one in which it was possible to hold certain notions, and many illusions, which are now untenable. Now Whitman was (and this Mr. Holloway's book makes abundantly clear) a "man with a message," even if that message was sometimes badly mutilated in transmission; he was interested in what he had to say; he did not think of himself primarily as the inventor of a new technique of versification. His "message" must be reckoned with, and it is a very different message from that of Mr. Carl Sandburg.

The world of the American voyage in "Martin Chuzzlewit" is the same. Dickens knew best what it looked like, but Whitman knew what it felt like. There is another interesting parallel: "Leaves of Grass" appeared in 1856, "Les Fleurs du mal" in 1857: could any age have produced more heterogeneous leaves and flowers? The contrasts should be noted. But perhaps more important than these contrasts is the similarity of Whitman to another master, one whose greatness he always recognized and whose eminence he always acknowledged generously—to Tennyson. Between the ideas of the two men, or, rather, between the relations of the ideas of each to his place and time, between the ways in which each held his ideas, there is a fundamental resemblance. Both were born laureates. Whitman, of course, fought hard against corruption, against Press servility, against slavery, against alcohol (and I dare say Tennyson would have done so under the same conditions); but essentially he was satisfied—too satisfied—with things as they are. His labourers and pioneers (at that date all Anglo-Saxon, or at least North European, labourers and pioneers) are the counterpart to Tennyson's great broad-shouldered Englishman at whom Arnold pokes fun; Whitman's horror at the monarchical tyranny of Europe is the counterpart to Tennyson's comment on the revolutions of French politics, no "graver than a schoolboy's barring out." Baudelaire, on the other hand, was a disagreeable person who was rarely satisfied with anything: *je m'ennuie en France*, he wrote, *ou tout le monde ressemble à Voltaire*.

I do not mean to suggest that all discontent is divine, or that all self-righteousness is loathsome. On the contrary, both Tennyson and Whitman made satisfaction almost magnificent. It is not the best aspect of their verse; if neither of them had more, neither of them would be still a great poet. But Whitman succeeds in making America as it was, just as Tennyson made England as it was, into something grand and significant. You cannot quite say that either was

deceived, and you cannot at all say that either was insincere, or the victim of popular cant. They had the faculty—Whitman perhaps more prodigiously than Tennyson—of transmuting the real into an ideal. Whitman had the ordinary desires of the flesh; for him there was no chasm between the real and the ideal, such as opened before the horrified eyes of Baudelaire. But this, and the "frankness" about sex for which he is either extolled or mildly reproved, did not spring from any particular honesty or clearness of vision: it sprang from what may be called either "idealization" or a faculty for make-believe, according as we are disposed. There is, fundamentally, no difference between the Whitman frankness and the Tennyson delicacy, except in its relation to public opinion of the time. And Tennyson liked monarchs, and Whitman liked presidents. Both were conservative, rather than reactionary or revolutionary; that is to say, they believed explicitly in progress, and believed implicitly that progress consists in things remaining much as they are.

If this were all there is to Whitman, it would still be a great deal; he would remain a great representative of America, but emphatically of an America which no longer exists. It is not the America of Mr. Scott Fitzgerald, or Mr. Dos Passos, or Mr. Hemingway—to name some of the more interesting of contemporary American writers. If I may draw still one more comparison, it is with Hugo. Beneath all the declamations there is another tone, and behind all the illusions there is another vision. When Whitman speaks of the lilacs or of the mocking-bird, his theories and beliefs drop away like a needless pretext.

T. S. ELIOT.

## THE PEASANT'S SONS

**The Dying Peasant.** By J. W. ROBERTSON SCOTT. (Williams & Norgate. 10s. 6d.)

"IN most villages there seems to be an old man—not so old really—hobbling about with a bad leg. He says it pains him at times. But what would he be without the bad leg? He has come to accept it, a sad visitation no doubt; but still his own, a familiar feature of his life." In this picturesque apologue the author describes the present state of our agriculture. We, the people of Great Britain, are the old man, agriculture our bad leg; and so accustomed have we grown to our hobbling condition that most of us have ceased to worry ourselves about the surprising fact that in this country that was once so famous for its farming—with its excellent soil, its excellent climate, excellent at least for farming purposes, and some of the best food markets in the world—this great industry, alone of all our principal industries, should have decayed as it has done. If it had been altogether neglected and overlooked, its condition might be better understood, but, as the author justly points out, very large sums are spent every year in subsidies, in research, in experimental and demonstration work, so that it is probably true to say that no other business in the country receives from the State so much monetary assistance. Into the precise causes of this anomalous state of things Mr. Scott hardly troubles to inquire, but with a vividness that comes from accurate observation and an authority which cannot be questioned he describes to us its inevitable results. A set of workers underpaid and abominably ill-housed, "a mind-deadening atmosphere," and employers who in many cases are ignorant and prejudiced, and sometimes grossly unjust to the men they employ—these are the bitter fruits of our present agricultural system. Mr. Scott, as we have said, writes with authority. He has studied rural conditions both in Denmark and in Holland; he knows Scotland as only a Scot can know it; his descriptions of farming in Scotland are, indeed, some of the best things in the book—but above all he knows the atmosphere of the English village as you may still find it in the more remote agricultural districts. Take his description of a village which he calls Nether Gloaze:—

"These people are not in despair, are not desperate. If they had been they would have struck a blow for themselves. In a parish where they can still see the baulks of the open fields of their Saxon forefathers, they do not seem within

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living memory to have lifted a hand on their own behalf. Not one of them was in Joseph Arch's Union. . . . They don't really care enough about their condition to do much more than grumble." . . .

Not despair, but hopelessness is the feeling that he finds:—

"Their lives have been leading them nowhere in this world, and more and more they are inclined to discount the parson's allegations about another."

But "The Dying Peasant," in spite of its title, is not all so sad as this. If Nether Gloaze is typical of many rural villages, there are others—there is one about a rifle-shot away—of a far happier kind; and, indeed, as one pursues the story, one begins to wonder why the author should have thought it necessary to label his book with so tragic a name. On this point, however, his own explanation is disarmingly frank. "The problem," he says, "of a rural book is to get it read by people who are not rural; so I beat the drum before my publishers' booth with the most arresting title I can think of"; and having thus strapped his drum upon his chest he goes on at once to tell us, in his pleasant way, what a mere drum it is. For the old peasant life of England is already, as he says, obsolete. The daily paper, the minimum wage, the motor-bicycle, the wireless installation, and—he might have added—the old age pension, all these new products of our civilization are trickling new wine into the old bottles. It is already "difficult to distinguish the farm-worker from the town-worker."

At last, at page 180, the title is definitely abandoned:—

"The peasant is dead, but his sons remain, and the rise of a race of agricultural workers of whose usage we shall not be ashamed seems sure. British agriculture is not dying. . . ."

It is to a better land system, better housing, and better education—most of all to better education—that the author trusts to bring a better day, and in this book he indicates—though not always perhaps quite so clearly or systematically as one could wish—how the coming of that day may be hastened. Altogether a very interesting study of a difficult and most important subject.

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### THREE POETS

**Collected Poems.** By HERBERT READ. (Faber & Gwyer. 6s.)

**The Song of Love.** By W. H. DAVIES. (Cape. 3s. 6d.)

**News of the Devil.** By HUMBERT WOLFE. (Benn. 3s. 6d. Edition de luxe, 7s. 6d.)

MR. READ's poems remind me of a bonfire flaming on a stormy night. All around is darkness; overhead, the flying clouds and the abysses of space; the lurid flame shoots upward, rearing itself out of a volume of black smoke; what phoenix will rise, to-morrow, from the ashes? Mr. Read is not only a poet, he is also a critic; and although it is easy enough to trace in the poet the system of taste and opinion that the critic has evolved, he has yet been able to avoid the dangers of such a double profession, and, far from allowing any critical aridity to overspread his poetry, has wisely imported into the one craft only that which is most useful in the other. Thus, while as a critic he writes that "an opinion or a judgment is never uttered except as the offspring of a total attitude," as a poet he lives up to this statement, so that his work offers a rare unity, exists within a universe of his own creation; scarcely a phrase, opening his book at random, but might not stand for an expression, or at least a facet, of his "total attitude." This sureness, this intensity, is the quality which almost compels the use of an image such as that which stands at the beginning of this notice. Another reader might choose a different image, poetry being so personal a thing, making so personal an impact on separate minds; but whatever the image suggested, it would surely and inevitably be true within its own confines, so definite and vehement is the suggesting agency. Nor does Mr. Read, as many a lesser poet, owe this impression to any superficialities of his poetical *décor*; it is his general metaphysical attitude—so dark and tormented, yet so perfectly under control—and not his stock-in-trade, which is important. His debt to the seventeenth-

century metaphysicians is obvious—his recurrent metaphor of the wheel "flying on so fair an axle" especially recalls Henry Vaughan—but he is a metaphysician with a difference: his thought is transmuted not only poetically, but also scientifically; Einstein and Eddington have coloured him no less than Donne. Had I to choose the most characteristic of his poems, I should pick out "The Retreat," the "Monologue Addressed to a Wondering Tyro," and the "Mutations of the Phoenix," which gave its name to an earlier collection, but I would not omit from my anthology the very lovely "Falcon and Dove," which seems to me, in texture at any rate, perhaps the most perfect of his poems.

About Mr. Davies's "The Song of Love" there is really very little to say. One is so well accustomed to hearing the words "Herrick" and "lyric" applied to him that to the weary ear in this connection they begin to make a perfect rhyme. Mr. Davies at his best was and is enchanting; but this April freshness can be overdone. It rings a little false; and a little too easy. For instance:—

"The story of my love shall be,  
When I am one with Her,  
Far richer than a Blackbird's yarn  
In merry April's ear.

"I praise the Blackbird's golden bill  
Because of his golden song:  
Were Love less kind than she is fair,  
The devil could take my song."

It is all very competent, however; and it is only fair to add that in his foreword Mr. Davies explains that "in writing these verses I am attempting to make poetry popular."

Mr. Wolfe's "News of the Devil" has had a good deal of success. Satire (a curiously rare gift) nearly always pleases, and it is amusing to see what happens when Mr. Paul Arthur, newspaper proprietor, is brought face to face with God. Although, personally speaking, I have preferred Mr. Wolfe's other poems to this, I must concede that it is ably done, and, moreover, softens—or should I say rises?—at moments to passages of real beauty:—

"Nothing is here recaptured, but the thin  
Perfume that reaches like a violin  
Up to the fifth in frozen fern and frond,  
But the living green of music is beyond."

I like Mr. Wolfe much better when he writes like that than in the mood which makes him write like this:—

"And Mr. Arthur goggled like a cod,  
And formed a low opinion of God."

V. SACKVILLE-WEST.

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**Chosen Essays.** By EDWARD THOMAS. (Gregynog Press. 25s.)

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**A Gleaming Cohort.** A selection from the works of G. K. CHESTERTON. (Methuen. 2s. 6d.)

In his essay called "A Group of Statuary," Edward Thomas wrote:—

"She bore about with her those beautiful brown eyes, and, save that no doubt men would kiss her for them, they served no purpose which is not served by the eyes of a weasel or a crow. In a musician, now, in a lovely woman living among mountain lakes—such eyes would have done many missions for the soul. They were like wild-voiced nightingales in their silence. . . . A musician or a poet with such eyes would have told us subtle, remote, lustrous things, and if we had not listened in his lifetime, yet when he was dead and known to all, his eyes would still be remembered."

This is part of his terrible description of a group of wastrels lying under the plane trees of a London square, but it is also curiously prophetic of his own fate. Whatever the colour of his eyes, Edward Thomas had through them an almost unique spiritual possession of the British countryside. It is idle to speculate how great a poet they would have made him had he lived. He is dead, and people did not listen to him in his lifetime, which was spent under the necessity of

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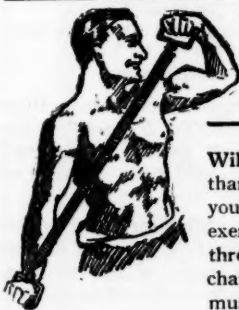
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Mr. Ivor Brown's volume of essays, "Masks and Phases," is full of puns and epigrams, shrewdness, hard-hitting Scottish argumentativeness, and solid knowledge of several sorts of world. It contains a good deal of acute dramatic criticism, including welcome news about the theatre in Prague, Vienna, and Moscow. Mr. Brown is happy in taking a firm stand in the middle of things. This gives him the opportunity of hitting out blithely on both sides of him, as any "Revivalist," "Little Impuritan," or worshipper of the 'Nineties who reads this book will realize. But Mr. Brown is much more than a man of the theatre. "Pierrot at Cheynton" is a very good essay which shows his range; in this he writes a history of Nigger Minstrel and of his background of South Coast watering places which is full of social and economic insight.

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 "And some dinner," I added.  
 "You can't have anything *hot*," she said, "but you can have some ham."  
 "Ham?" I said.  
 "Ham," she said.  
 "I turned to Gregory. 'Would you like some ham?' I asked.  
 "Not if there's anything else," he replied.  
 "I turned to the landlady. 'We should like some ham,' I said.  
 "We had some ham."

After that, who will dare to write an essay on ham? However, in this book—in spite of "The Old Friend," "The Crush," and "The Rock Garden," which are truly "gorgeous"—"Evøe" does not keep his form so well as Father Knox.

Finally, there is Mr. Chesterton, who certainly writes essays, but continues to evade classification. In "A Gleaming Cohort," Mr. Lucas has chosen some of the very best things—such as "The Poet Hump," "The Romance of Rhyme," the last chapter of "Charles Dickens," and parts of "The White Horse"—as well as some not so good. Mr. Lucas is rather bold in dismembering some of the essays, but he does this skilfully, and if there is anyone who still awaits an introduction to Mr. Chesterton, this book will serve him well.

## CLISSOLD OUTWRITTEN

*Letters to America.* By BERNARD GILBERT. (Oxford: Blackwell, 21s.)

How few heed us villagers when we say, as politely as we can, that what strikes us about many of the citylings (Bernard Gilbert's word) who want to have something done for us (by their party) is their impatience and cocksureness! Any kind of reconnaissance, with guides of their own way of thinking, seems to satisfy them. Nothing that we may murmur about the complexities of our rural civilization has any effect. That old practitioners in the attempt to portray the rural scene should have to write and rewrite, and ponder and puzzle, and rewrite once more, and still be miserably dissatisfied with the adequacy of the picture, past consoling by the pleasantest of reviews, is to them foolishness. Why should not the rural writer be able to tell Mr. and Mrs. Urban right off all they need to know before their resolute reforming begins? It is too bad of Bernard Shaw, to whom people do listen, not to explain to the world just what our trouble is with the Broadbent boys, who, their father having done all that could be done for Ireland, intend to see to the shires.

Alone among country writers, Bernard Gilbert, blessed with patience, leisure, an income, and outstanding gifts of perception and description, has refused to be put out of his step by townees. This book, this 200,000 words of a quarto, is actually the eighth in a series of his in which he has been giving the whole of his mind to painting a corner of a county! He calls these "Letters to America" The Urban View. The book has been preceded by (counting backwards) his Symposium ("Canon Makepeace"), The Moving Pictures ("Bly Market"), The Tales ("Crosslights"), The Poems ("The Rural Scene"), The Novel ("Tyler of Barnet"), The Plays ("King Lear at Hordle"), and The Aeroplane View ("Old England"). This library from one man's pen is to be indomitably added to by more Plays ("Peers Woodman") and The Election ("Malestrom")—announced as "at press" and "in preparation." The parts to follow include Adventures, Wanderings, Reminiscences, A Dream of Judgment, and A Morality Pageant—"differing aspects of the same scene over the same period." When completed "Old England"—the general name for the whole work—"will be revised, rearranged, and republished as one work"!

How many thousand characters this life-work will succeed in bringing into print it is impossible to imagine. Gilbert's fertility is surprising. On almost every other page some new countryman or countrywoman is etched. It cannot be said that there is no padding, but there is nowhere padding without a charm of its own and a purpose. I read the whole 200,000 words in two sittings. Gilbert is a rare artist, not only because he is so able an executant, but because he is creating his own vehicle. "It's no use telling me," he says, in explanation of his point of view, "that the function of an artist is to select and isolate, because I can't agree." Hear him on our greatest novelist:—

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As Gilbert, speaking through one of his familiars in these ingenious "Letters to America," says of the task he has imposed on himself: "It means the rest of my life. I shall be at it when the pen falls from my hand, but I'll get some done, at any rate; and if, like Chaucer, I can't finish, I'll do what I can."

Some of the things that the best rural students feel most deeply about the countryside are said here perfectly, and, as I think, enduringly. I do not disguise my satisfaction at



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the thought that such a truth-telling and alluring book as this is going to get into the hands of many people who will never dream from its title that they have ordered rural sociology into the house. Of course, there are, in this volume and elsewhere in the series, no end of *obiter dicta* from which I strongly dissent. But I beware, as other readers must, of taking any of Gilbert's Clissolds for Gilbert.

J. W. ROBERTSON SCOTT.

### FRENCH VERSE

**The Oxford Book of French Verse.** Edited by ST. JOHN LUCAS. (Clarendon Press. 8s. 6d.)

THE chief interest of this new edition is that it contains some sixty odd poems not before included; most of them by recent poets, for the earlier part has not been left untouched. There is added an interesting and delightful anonymous twelfth-century poem, "Lou samedi a soir, fat la semaine": two poems by Desbordes-Valmore have gone, and will not much be missed: two by Hugo, but one of them has been replaced; four new ones by Lamartine, who already had more than fair space: and though two Mussets have disappeared, a new one has come in, accompanied by four new Vignys. La Fontaine's "La Cigale et la Fourmi" has wisely been omitted, as it must surely occur in every French primer: a poem by Bouilhet has taken its place.

No living poets have been included, following the old principle, but all the important later ones except Apollinaire are represented, and now, at last, Heredia; at last, because permission could not be obtained to print him in the former volume. Of him Mr. Lucas has made a wise and generous choice of nine poems. The other new laureates are: Corbière (only one poem), Charles Guérin (six), Laforgue (three), Mallarmé (four), Moréas (four), Prudhomme (five), Richépin (one), Rimbaud (three), Rodenbach (three), Rostand (one), Samain (five), Verhaeren (five). These proportions call for some comment.

It is true that an anthology must always to a certain extent be a personal choice, and no other person would have chosen quite as Mr. Lucas has done, even if he had adopted his system of representing new poets by the work which is most, not least, like that of the earlier ones. But in voicing some objections one may feel that one has the weight of informed critical opinion behind one. In the old part, for instance, was there not already enough Alfred de Vigny, and are there not still too many pages of Hugo? Certainly when M. André Gide was asked who was the greatest French poet, he answered "Victor Hugo," but he added, "Hélas!" and since changes were to be made, surely de Nerval's "El Desdichado" should have been given a place; and as Laforgue's "Il était un roi de Thulé" is included, it might have served a critical purpose to have given us de Nerval's poem on the same theme. This sort of comparison has been excellently provided by Heredia's and Samain's Cleopatra poems, with the cheering result that we now see how weak and factitious Samain really is. It makes us wonder all the more that he should have been given so much space, and the sinewy Corbière so little, one short poem only, though a characteristic one. Why are we not given the "Rapsode Foraine"? Rodenbach's dulcet murmurings might have been shortened, while Verhaeren drones on through pages which seem endless, and Rimbaud, with his astonishing variety, is given far too meagre shrift. True, the "Bateau Ivre" is there, but instead of "O Saisons, O Châteaux," or "A quatre heures du matin l'été," or "Les Chercheuses de Poux," we are given "Tartufe" and "Les Effarés." Could we not have had one of these others instead of the ballad-concert verse "Ah, si vous saviez" of Prudhomme (five poems)? We also miss "L'Après-midi d'un Faune" from Mallarmé. Laforgue is fairly well treated, though his use of longer metres might have been exemplified by, say, the "Complainte du Temps"; but with him the

choice is bound to be very personal. Nevertheless, on the whole this book is most welcome, and makes a pleasant addition to one's shelves.

### ON THE EDITOR'S TABLE

THE University of London Press publish "St. Francis of Assisi, 1226-1226," essays in commemoration by Professor Borenius, Professor Burkitt, and seven other writers, and with a preface by Professor Paul Sabatier (16s.). Another book on Assisi just published is an excellent guide, which is also historical, "The Inquiring Pilgrim's Guide to Assisi," by Mary Lovett Cameron (Methuen, 7s. 6d.)

Two interesting books on wine and its history are: "Bottlescrew Days: Wine Drinking in England during the Eighteenth Century," by André L. Simon (Duckworth, 21s.), and "Wine and the Wine Lands of the World," by Frank Hedges Butler (Benn, 15s.).

Mr. Humphrey Milford publishes a seasonable anthology, "A Book of Christmas Verse," by H. C. Beeching (6s.).

Messrs. Jarrolds publish a new and revised edition of "The Complete Limerick Book," by Langford Reed, illustrated by H. M. Bateman (7s. 6d.); 8,000 copies of the first edition were sold.

"Victorian Jottings," by Sir James Crichton-Browne (EtcHELLS & Macdonald, 15s.), are from an old commonplace book or diary begun during Sir James's student days and carried down to the end of his career. "The Life of James W. Alsop," by his wife (University Press of Liverpool, and Hodder & Stoughton, 5s.), contains an introductory chapter by Mr. Augustine Birrell.

"History of Barclays Bank Limited," by P. W. Matthews, edited by A. W. Tuke, has just been published (Blades, East & Blades, two guineas).

### NEW GRAMOPHONE RECORDS

BELTONE records include this month: "I will extol thee, O Lord" and "Ave, Maria," sung by May Huxley, soprano (12-in. 7009. 6s. 6d.), and "Come to the Fair" and "I passed by your window," sung by Jack Wright, tenor (10-in. 6068. 3s.). The 2s. 6d. records include: "The Donovans" and "The Colleen Bawn," sung by Flintoff Moore, baritone (1088); "Sonny Boy" and "The Skipper of the Mary Jane," sung by Elliot Dobie, bass (1094); "Rock of Ages" and "O God our help" (1100); "Kaleidoscope Dance Medley," played by Sutherland Dance Orchestra (1089 and 1090); "The Kilties" and "March of the Hebrides," zither banjo, played by Jan Wien (1117); "St. Louis Hop" and "On the Riviera," foxtrots, played by Sunny South Orchestra (1113); "A Few Seasonal Anecdotes" and "The Carol Singers," by Middleton Woods (1105).



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THE PRINCIPALSHIP OF THE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF WALES, Aberystwyth (a Constituent College of the University of Wales), being vacant consequent upon the death of Principal J. H. Davies, the Council of the College will shortly proceed to appoint a successor, and are prepared to receive before February 1st, 1927, the names of persons who are willing to be considered for the appointment, together with such particulars as they may desire to submit. Communications should be addressed to the President of the College, David Davies, Esq., M.P., Plas Dinam, Llandinam, or the General Secretary of the College, from whom full particulars of the appointment may be obtained.  
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## FINANCIAL SECTION

## THE WEEK IN THE CITY

## NEWSPAPER FINANCE—SNIA VISCOSA BONDS—AMERICAN CELLULOSE.

THE publication of the November overseas trade returns, and of the Armstrong Whitworth report this week, successfully kept enthusiasm away from the stock markets. The first suggested that the country has little, if anything, left over in the trade balance for foreign investment, while the second suggested that there is little, if any, profit left in the heavy industries at home. There are flourishing industries at home, and the newspaper business is one of them. But even the Amalgamated Press issue this week was not a brilliant success. As the assets of a newspaper are chiefly good-will, it is imperative in a public issue of newspaper preference shares to give full details of the respective balance-sheets and trading accounts, and, secondly, to secure the preference dividend by assets showing a generous margin in excess of the issue. On these two cardinal points the prospectus of the 4,500,000 7 per cent. cumulative preference shares of Amalgamated Press, Ltd., singularly failed to satisfy both curiosity and caution. The Company acquires the business of Amalgamated Press (1922), which was founded by the late Lord Northcliffe with the publication of ANSWERS, and now includes among its assets a number of other publications and the majority of the shares of Imperial Paper Mills. The Company also acquires the remaining ordinary shares of Imperial Paper Mills, the publications of Cassell & Co., Ltd., and the whole of the share capital of Waverley Book Co., Ltd. The purchase price paid to Amalgamated Press (1922), Ltd., is £8,027,719, of which £5,810,008 is payable in cash, and most of the balance in 5½ per cent. First Mortgage Debenture Stock of the new company. An intelligent public would require to examine the balance-sheets of the various companies acquired to see how much of the assets bought by so many millions was represented by good-will. Not a single balance-sheet was published in the prospectus. There was a bare statement by the auditors of the combined net profits of the undertakings acquired which shows that in the last two years these profits have been slightly declining. That again rouses curiosity. Even taking the average of the past four years' profits (£870,788, subject to taxation), the preference dividend (£815,000), after making provision for the interest and sinking fund on the debentures, is only covered approximately twice. For an investment of this character this appears to us to be an inadequate cover. The promoter of the issue is Graphic Publications, Ltd., which is owned by Sir William and Mr. J. Gomer Berry. It passes on its acquisitions at cost, but receives a 3 per cent. commission for a guarantee of the subscription at par of £782,284 of the Company's Debenture Stock. No doubt the outside public cannot hope for more than the crumbs which fall from the newspaper proprietor's table, but the preference shares of Amalgamated Press are perhaps more exiguous and unpalatable than most newspaper crumbs.

In THE NATION of November 6th we referred to the general financial crisis in Italy, and in particular to the domestic troubles of Snia Viscosa. An issue of £1,400,000 7½ per cent. Sterling First Mortgage Bonds of this Company was made in London this week at 98 per cent. by Hambro's Bank and Higginson & Company. This issue is part of the reconstruction scheme to which Snia Viscosa finds it necessary to submit as a result, first, of the slump in the artificial silk industry in the early part of this year, and, secondly, of the deflation policy now pursued by the Italian Treasury. This policy takes the form of definite restrictions on credit facilities granted by banks to industry, and has naturally been followed by a rapid rise in the rates at which any

credits made available were granted. Rates as high as 14 per cent. have been paid by Snia Viscosa for part of their floating debt. A scheme of reconstruction has been agreed upon between the President of the Company, Hambro's Bank, and Higginson & Co. The issue of the Sterling Debentures is the final step in this scheme. The capital has already been reduced from 1,000,000,000 lire to 750,000,000 lire by the writing down of the 250 lire shares to 150 lire, the difference being transferred to reserve in the balance-sheet, and at the same time 250,000,000 lire in shares of 150 lire have been issued in Italy, bringing the capital again up to 1,000,000,000 lire. The bonds will be redeemed on or before December 31st, 1951, by an annual sinking fund of £61,000 commencing in 1929. They are secured as a first specific mortgage or charge under Italian Law on the lands and buildings now owned by the Company and two of its subsidiaries, and upon the entire share capital of these subsidiaries. The land forming the several sites for the works and buildings is itself valued in excess of the amount of the bond issue. If the artificial silk industry experiences another slump it is, of course, of no great value to know that the annual interest on the bonds is covered ten times on the basis of the average profits in the three years and ten months to July 31st, 1926. But the prospects of the Company are brighter. Whereas the sales of the three companies in the seven months to July 31st, 1926, averaged 1,848,000 lbs. a month, the sales for the four months to November, 1926, were 2,545,750 lbs. per month. The proceeds of the issue of the bonds and shares will enable the Company to complete its present programme of development without any further financing and to pay off all temporary loans and advances incurred. At the issue price of 98 the yield is over 8 per cent., and, allowing for redemption at maturity, the yield is £8 8s. 3d. per cent.

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The latest information regarding the American Cellulose & Chemical Manufacturing Company makes the 7 per cent. First Cumulative Participating Preferred shares of \$100 each look attractive at their present price. These shares are quoted in the London market at £20. The President of the Company has recently stated that the estimated operating profit of the Company before deducting bond interest, income tax, depreciation, &c., for the year ending December, 1926, will approximately be \$1,400,000. On this basis, after allowing for taxation, interest on bonds, and dividend on preferred shares, the earnings are equivalent to approximately \$2½ per share on the outstanding common shares. The earnings have shown a steady increase during the current year, and it is understood that in each of the last three months an increased net profit has been earned. All this has been achieved with a plant producing approximately 2 tons per day, and it is expected that by next March this scale of production will have been doubled. The products of the American Cellulose Company are of exceptionally high quality, and on this account it has not been necessary for the Company to reduce its selling price along the lines followed by other artificial silk producers in America, and indeed throughout the world, during the current year. The Company, in fact, finds the market for its products mainly in conjunction with the real silk manufacturers, and not with the cotton manufacturers. The full dividend on the first participating preferred shares is now being paid, and 1½ per cent. of the arrears on this stock has been paid off this year. There is still outstanding 12½ per cent. of arrears on the first preferred stock, which it is anticipated will be paid off in the course of the next year or two. This stock is also entitled to 10 per cent. of the profits available for distribution after payment of the fixed dividend of 7 per cent.



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